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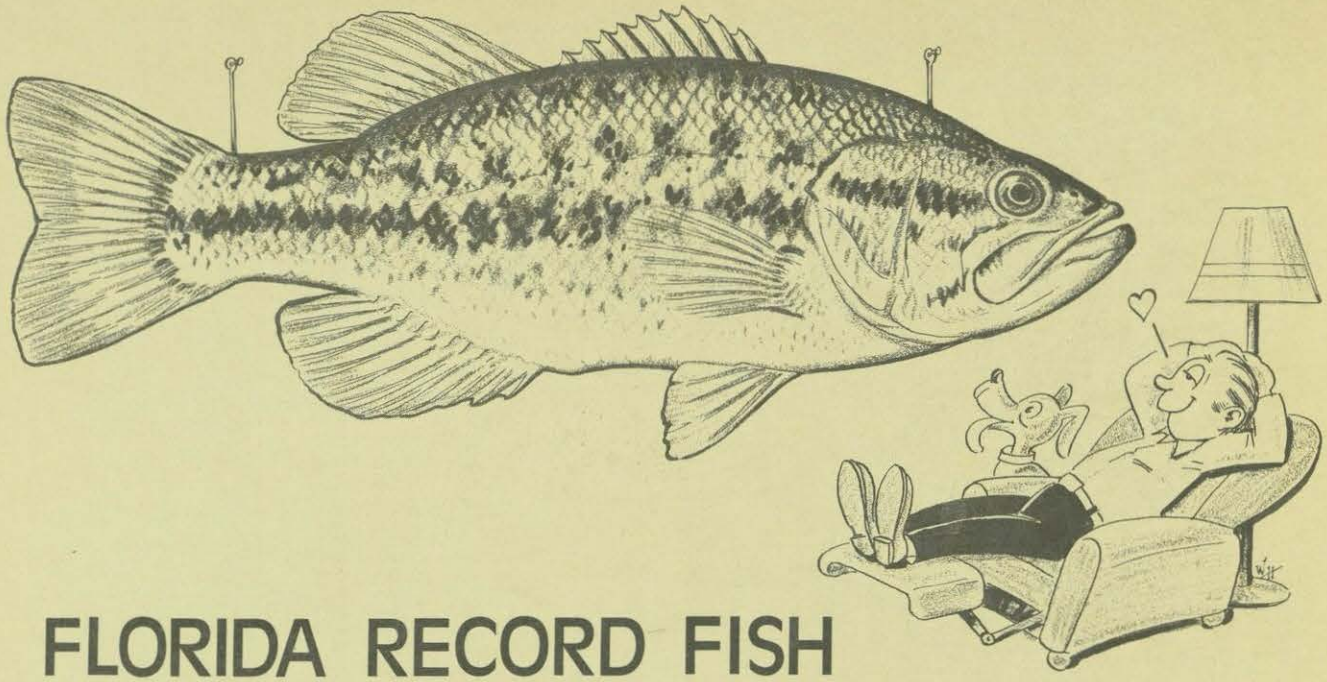
FLORIDA WILDLIFE

March-April 1981



FLORIDA RECORD FISH

AS OF MARCH 1, 1981

SPECIES	WEIGHT	WHERE CAUGHT	ANGLER	DATE
LARGEMOUTH BASS	19 lbs.	Lake Tarpon, Pinellas County	W.A. Witt	June 26, 1961
BLUEGILL	2 lbs. 12 oz.	Private pond, Hillsborough County	Don V. Flannery	April 7, 1978
BOWFIN (mudfish)	17 lbs. 3 oz.	Lake Tohopekaliga, Osceola County	Wilbur Glover	1971
CARP	28 lbs. 14 oz.	Apalachicola River, below Woodruff Gadsden County	Dick Anderson	June 21, 1978
CHAIN PICKEREL	8 lbs.	Lake Talquin, Gadsden County	Jimmy James	July 5, 1971
CHANNEL CATFISH	43 lbs.	Haines Creek, Lake County	Mike Davis	April 15, 1980
CRAPPIE (speckled perch)	3 lbs. 12 oz.	Newnans Lake, Alachua County	John McGilvray	Dec. 29, 1964
REDBREAST	1 lb. 7½ oz.	Suwannee River, Gilchrist County	Tommy D. Cason Jr.	April 30, 1977
SHELLCRACKER	3 lbs. 9 oz.	Merritt's Mill Pond, Jackson County	Ed Tyus	Feb. 17, 1981
STRIPED BASS	38 lbs. 9 oz.	Lake Seminole, Gadsden County	Justin McAlpin	Nov. 15, 1979
SUNSHINE BASS	14 lbs. 1 oz.	Apalachicola River, Gadsden County	Walter Gray	Nov. 27, 1979
SUWANNEE BASS	3 lbs. 8 oz.	Ochlockonee River, Gadsden County	J.G. Cannon	May 10, 1974
WARMOUTH	1 lb. 7 oz.	East River, Bay County	J.D. West	June 8, 1974
WHITE BASS	4 lbs. 8 oz.	Apalachicola River, Gadsden County	John W. Padgett	March 22, 1976
LONG-NOSED GAR	26 lbs.	Phosphate pit, Polk County	H.C. Lumley	June 22, 1980

OPEN - NO CURRENT RECORD RECOGNIZED
Minimum weight for record listing

Spotted gar	10 lbs.	American shad	4 lbs.
Florida gar	20 lbs.	Redfin pickerel	12 oz.
Alligator gar	70 lbs.	White catfish	5 lbs.
Alabama shad	2 lbs.	Spotted sunfish (stumpknocker)	1 lb.

Caught a record fish ?

Contact your regional education officer or fisheries biologist at the address listed on page 48 or contact the Office of Informational Services in Tallahassee 904/ 488-5564.

VOLUME 34, NO. 6

FLORIDA WILDLIFE

MARCH - APRIL 1981

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THE COVER

The mating game, Mother Nature's annual springtime production, is met with enthusiasm by wild turkeys, despite the nonchalant appearance of the hens, in the cover scene. Hopeful gobbler hunters are also turned on by the sights and sounds of strutting toms, part of the special lure of spring gobbler hunting.

From a painting by Wallace Hughes

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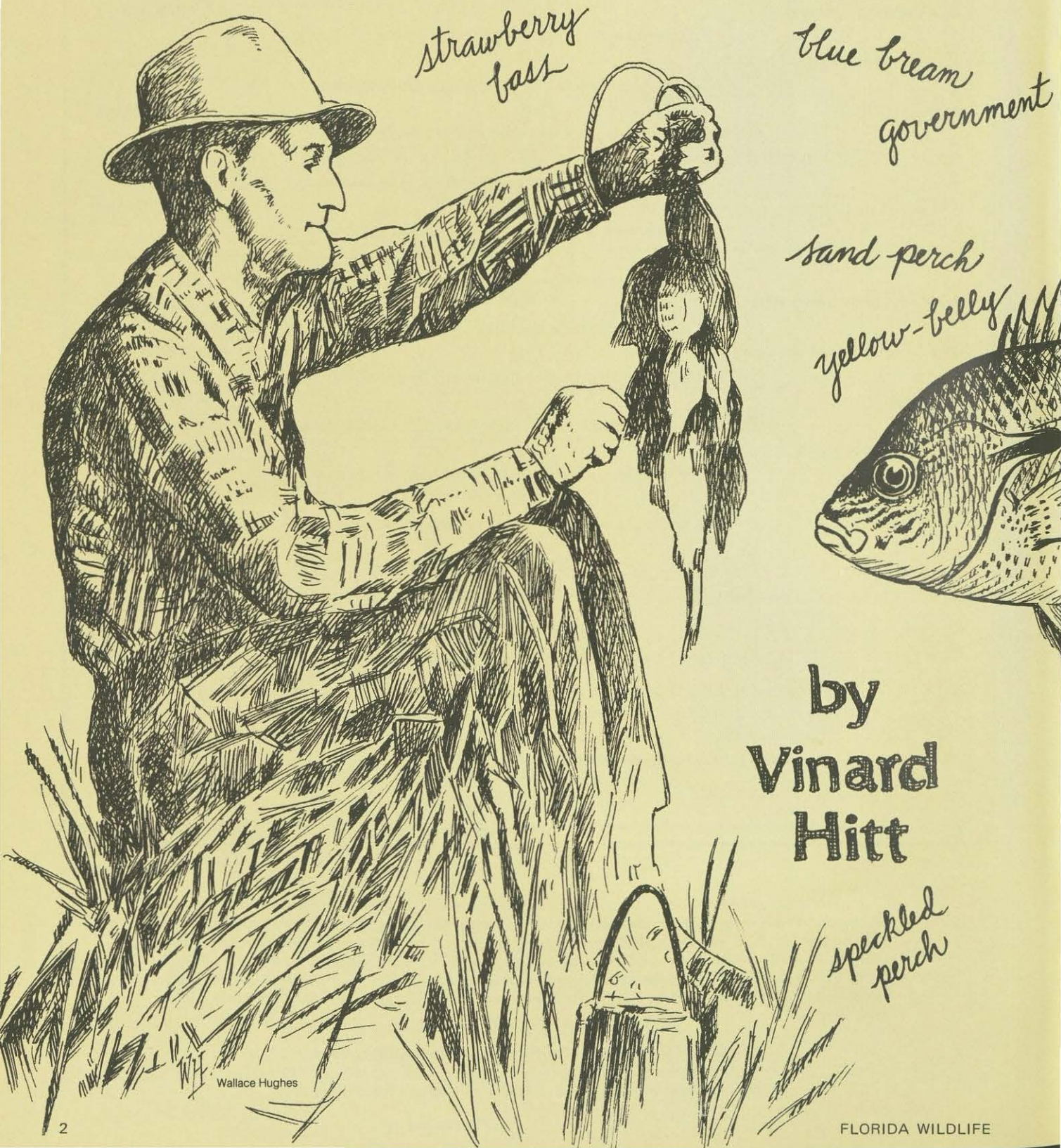
By any other NAME it's



by Vinard Hitt

Fish tagged with colorful colloquial names are as much a part of the southern scene as cheese-grits and red-eye gravy. Long before universally accepted common names were established, most species of fish inhabiting southeastern waters were labeled with a variety of local monikers. Many local names have endured although many of these are rarely understood outside a particular geographic area. One such misunderstanding has led to a rather amusing, though unsubstantiated, story involving a Commission employee.

The tale — which has been passed along for years by Commission employees — has it that some 20-odd years ago an employee trucked a load of fingerlings from the Commission's Blackwater hatchery near Holt to the federal hatchery on the St. Johns at Welaka. While in the Welaka area, he saw some sunfish which he thought were marked with unusually attractive colors. Copperhead was the name given to these sunfish by local fishermen. As the story goes, the employee was so impressed with this species that he made arrangements with federal hatchery personnel and eventually procured a small number of the fish. Subsequently, he returned to west Florida with the fish and for one reason or another, neglected to tell anyone of his intentions.

Although the employee was an excellent fish culturist, his experience with fish inhabiting waters outside the Panhandle was limited. Too, knowledge of the innumerable color variations that occur within a species which inhabits several drainages was also outside his experience. As a result — before someone caught on and set him straight — the employee spent several years trying to reproduce fry from a population of brood fish composed entirely of brilliantly colored male bluegills.

Copperhead, incidentally, is only one of a profusion of colloquial names for bluegill. Other often used nicknames include blue bream, government bream, bald bream, sunny and bull bream.

One of the most sought-after species of fish in the lake country of south-central Florida is the black crappie. Yet, few fisherman use the common name. Most fisherman know this species as speckled perch or

simply, speck. Besides speckled perch, the black crappie is also known by other pseudonyms such as bachelor, calico bass, sac-ā-lait, strawberry bass, tin-mouth, white perch, croppie and chinquapin perch.

One of the most common riverine sunfish populating southern streams is the redbreast sunfish. This species is almost universally labeled as redbelly or redbellied sunfish. Yet, robin, roach, leather ear, willow bream, sand perch and yellow belly are among a number of other names used to describe this species.

More time and money are probably spent annually by southern anglers in pursuit of the largemouth bass than for any other species. More often than not, this species goes by its accepted common name. Yet, colloquial names of long standing still persist in some areas. Some of the regional designations include cow bass, green bass, white salmon, white trout, green trout and black bass. Other titles, such as hawg and bucketmouth, have been added by contemporary bass anglers.

The much maligned bowfin is yet another species which has been dubbed with multifarious nicknames. Dogfish, cotton fish, black fish, grindle, mudfish and cypress trout are among the monikers used for this denizen of the lily pads and brush piles.

Over the last decade, I have spent several thousand hours interviewing fishermen on the lakes and streams of Florida. During this period, I have been exposed to a great variety of colloquial names for fish. Even now, though, as I interview fishermen along the winding course of west Florida's Escambia River, I occasionally learn a new, often highly descriptive local name.

Several weeks ago, I was conducting a creel survey at a fish camp located in the Escambia estuary. A fisherman docked his boat and I walked over to him. The conversation went something like this:

"Hello sir, I'm conducting a survey for the Game and Fish Commission and I would like to ask you a few questions."

"OK, shoot."

"How long did you fish today?"

"'Bout three hours."

"Were you fishing for any particular species?"

"Yeah, bream."

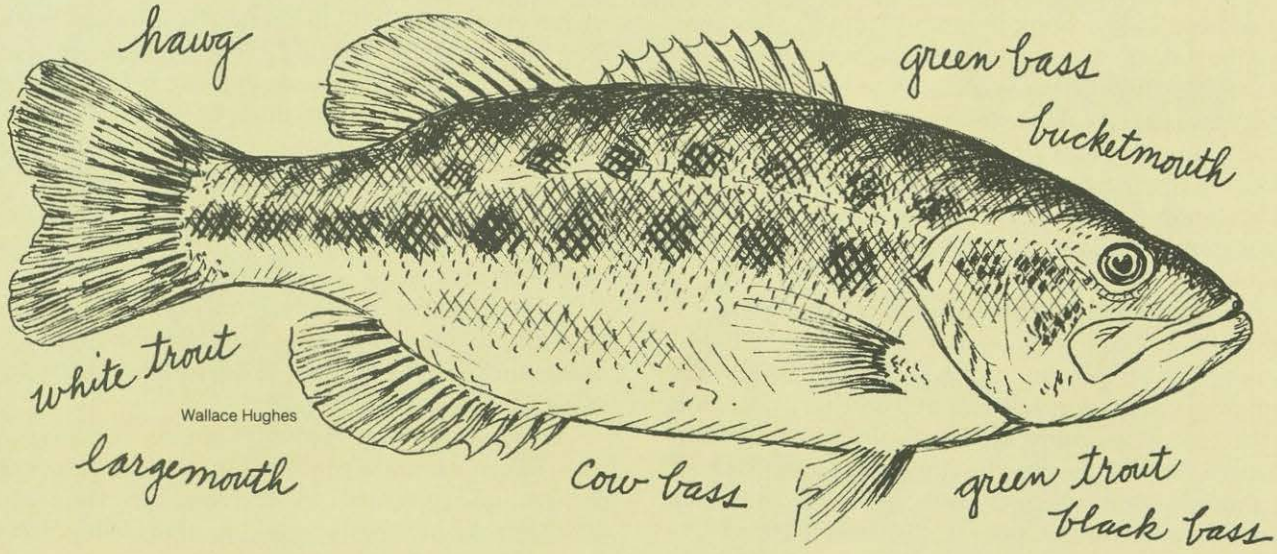
"How many did you catch?"

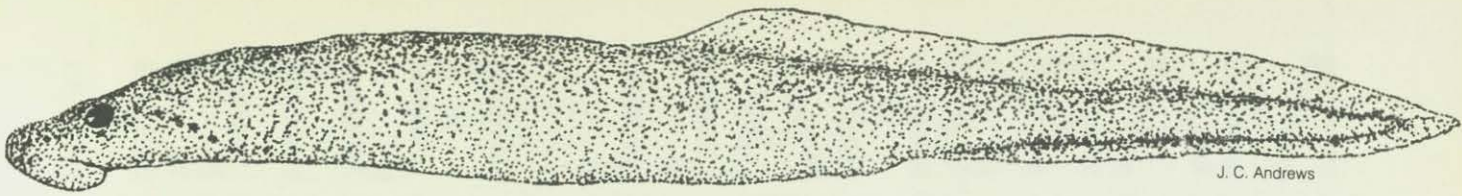
"Well, I'm not sure. I'll have to count 'um' . . . I've got four goggle-eye, nine river bream and a bugle-mouth bass."

Previously, I had learned that the phrase "goggle-eye" was generally used by locals to describe warmouth. Warmouth, by the way, are also often termed bigmouth, buffalo bass, red eye and even yaw-mouth bass. I wasn't confused by the term "river bream" either. The fisherman was talking about long ear sunfish which may also be called bloody sunfish, black ear, or redbelly. I was stumped by the bugle-mouth bass though. Not wanting to appear unschooled in the local lingo, I didn't ask for an explanation. Instead, I asked the fisherman if I might take a look at his catch after he trailered his boat. He obliged and subsequently, I learned that a bugle-mouth bass is nothing more exotic than a spotted sucker.

To the researcher writing an annual report, a bluegill by any other name is still a bluegill. But the pragmatic researcher might do well to remember that under other circumstances, the bluegill might be more appropriately described by some other appellation. For instance, one evening several years back, I approached an elderly gentleman who was fishing from a perch atop a Suwannee River limestone outcrop. I inquired about his luck and he replied, "I've got a pretty good mess of bream."

Since "bream" is a catch-all category for a variety of sunfish, my data sheet had no space for such an entry. Subsequent to the fisherman's reply, I squatted on the bank and categorized his catch in terms of bluegill, redbreast, redear and spotted sunfish. The fisherman leaned over my shoulder and watched intently. Just as I stood to thank the gentleman for his cooperation and leave, he declared, rather stoically, "Son, you can call them fish anything you want to, but they's still bream and they's all mighty fine eating." He got no argument from me. □





J. C. Andrews

The BROOK LAMPREY

Undoubtedly the least known fish to swim the streams of Florida is the southern brook lamprey, *Ichthyomyzon gagei*. Its appearance contradicts the popular image of a fish, but like the gar and the mudfish, the lamprey is a primitive forerunner of more popular fishes such as the bass and catfish.

Being the only totally freshwater lamprey known to occur in Florida, identification of this eel-like fish is an easy matter. As lampreys go, it is a small species, rarely exceeding seven inches in length as an adult. A characteristic feature of this fellow is the large buccal funnel, a fleshy snout-like lobe surrounding the sucker mouth.

A secretive, nocturnal creature, the southern brook lamprey can be readily observed only during the spawning season in clear swift running coastal streams from the Florida panhandle to eastern Texas and Oklahoma. In Florida, collections of this fish have been made from the Ochlockonee River westward to the Perdido River drainage.

The southern brook lamprey is one of 15 species of lampreys that have adopted a non-parasitic, totally freshwater lifestyle. Its larger, more advanced cousin, the sea lamprey, is a parasitic species recorded in Florida freshwaters only from the St. Johns River system. Contrary to the southern brook lamprey, the sea-going species is anadromous; that is, the larvae hatch in freshwater and migrate to the sea. After some years in the ocean, they return to freshwater to spawn and die.

The lamprey life cycle is a unique one in that is passes through a larval form during which the ammocoete, undergoes an extended physical change very similar to the well documented metamorphosis of pollywog to frog. This fact, coupled with the primitive anatomy of lampreys, is considered strong evidence that the lampreys represent a developmental link between amphibians and the more advanced fishes.

In mid- to late spring, groups of five to 25 male and female southern brook lampreys congregate at potential nesting sites to spawn. These sites are in shallow water usually on the upstream margins of brook riffles where the bottom is composed of sand and gravel, typically devoid of logs and debris. Utilizing their mouths as suction discs, the lampreys methodically remove pebbles from the nest site. There are documented accounts of two lampreys jointly moving pebbles too large for a single individual to budge.

The lampreys continue until a shallow depression roughly six to eight inches wide is formed in the bottom. Then, with violent writhing movements, the females deposit their eggs above the nest. The males join in with equally spectacular gyrations and fertilize the eggs as they settle to the bottom. Sand, stirred up by the spawning activity, settles over the eggs and affords some protection from foraging fishes and crustaceans. After spawning, the adults abandon the nest and soon die.

Five to seven days after hatching, the tiny lamprey fry develop into larvae or ammocoetes. They leave the nest when their yolk sac food supply is nearly exhausted and randomly float downstream until suitable mud and silt substrates are encountered. With whip-like movements of the tail, the larva burrows into the soft bottom until only the snout and mouth protrude into the stream current. Careful observations around stream mudbanks and leaf piles will reveal the shallow conical burrows with the hooded snout of the resident extended. Over a period of three years the ammocoete slowly develops into the adult lamprey.

The larva rarely leaves the burrow. If it is displaced, a new burrow is soon constructed by the ammocoete. Upon reaching sexual maturity, the adult lamprey leaves the furrow to seek a suitable spawning site, thus completing the life cycle.

An interesting feature of the southern brook lamprey is that feeding is a function which predominates the larval life stage; the digestive tract of the adult is greatly degenerated and feeding at that stage is neglible. The ammocoete on the other hand is a voracious eater, filtering microorganisms and detritus from the stream current with its hooded buccal funnel.

Members of the lamprey family hold world wide acclaim as fish bait in both the adult and larval stages. This, in spite of noxious substances secreted by skin glands as protection from fungi and bacteria when they are burrowed in the bottom. The use of southern brook lampreys as bait is no doubt limited by the relative scarcity of these critters for much of the year; but one can't help speculate on the affect a seven inch wiggling lamprey would have on a hungry stream largemouth bass. □

By J. C. Andrews

MARSHALL FUTCH

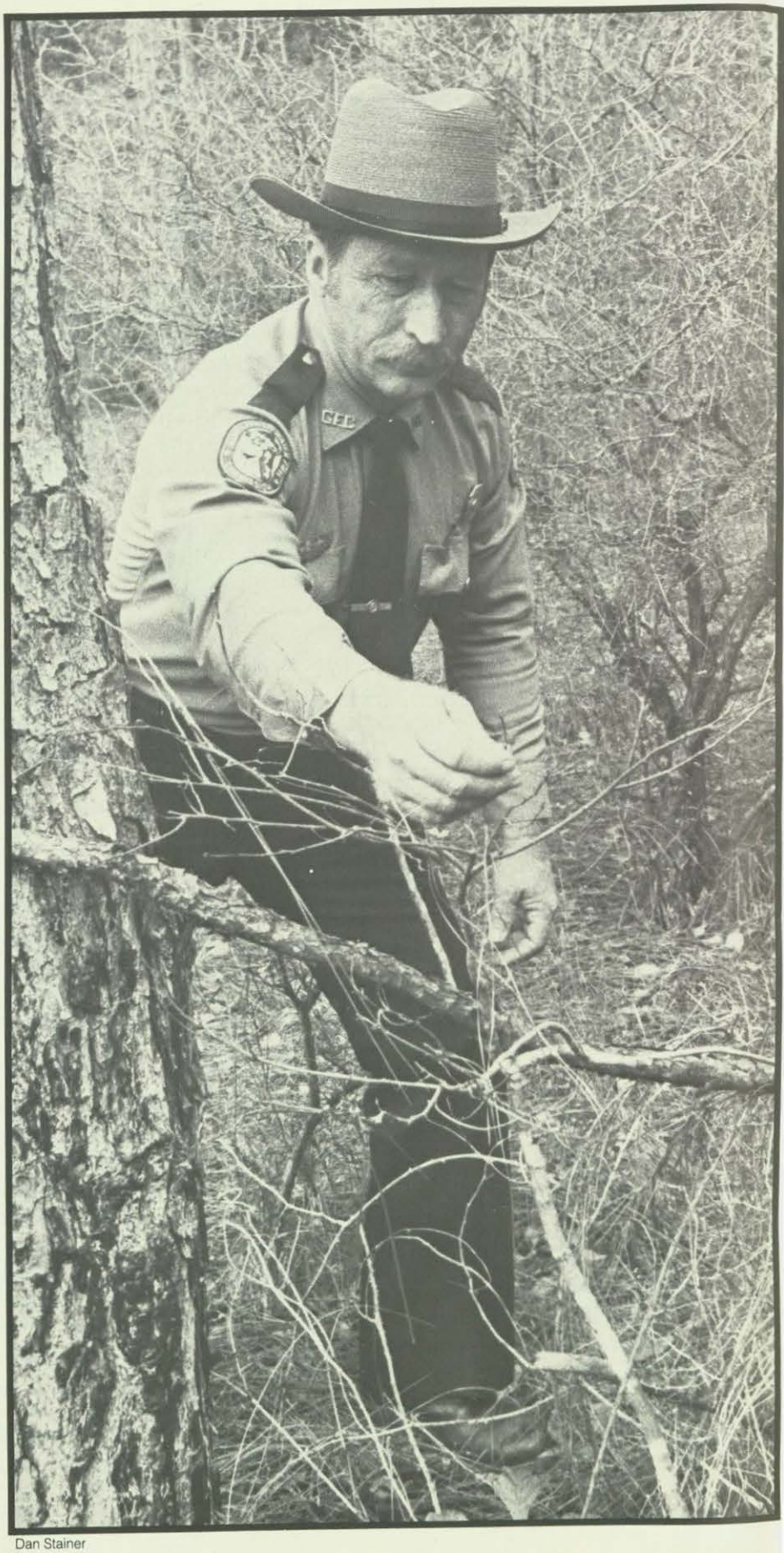
Protector Of Wildlife

◆

EXPERIENCED LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS OFTEN POSSESS A SIXTH SENSE ABOUT EVENTS IN WHICH THEY TAKE PART. OFFICER FUTCH MAY HAVE A SEVENTH.

◆

By Ron Stock



Dan Stainer

Every wildlife officer has his favorite story and Marshall Futch of the Game & Fresh Water Fish Commission recalls one he especially enjoys telling.

A few years ago he was on patrol in the rural county of Dixie, which borders the Gulf of Mexico in the "Big Bend" country of north Florida. He happened on an automobile parked near isolated California Swamp. A woman sat alone on the passenger side.

Futch stopped his patrol car and, as he was getting out to determine what was what, he heard three shotgun blasts, and after a pause, a fourth from the swamp.

Sensing something astir, he proceeded into the lowland cypress swamp, walking down a little used path. He eventually encountered a man who said he was "hunting squirrels." Lacking any evidence to the contrary, Futch chatted for a moment about the weather or whatever, and they parted. The man walked out toward his car.

Futch, like any experienced law enforcement officer, is possessed with a "sixth sense" about such events. "People don't usually fire shots in that sequence when they're hunting squirrels," he explained, "not unless they're unusually poor shots. He walked on into the hammock.

So on that nice fall day in Dixie County, the wildlife officer was adamant about breaking the bluff he thought he had just been handed. Slowly and thoroughly he scanned the area in front of him as he stepped carefully along.

Sidestepping catclaw briars, fedder bush and scraggly wax myrtle, he kept his eyes on the ground. Any evidence would help. Then he spotted three 12-gauge hulls on the ground. Seconds later, he found the fourth. Markings on the latter showed it had carried 00 buck, a mite large for squirrels.

He then checked vegetation and found where a shot charge had cut a swath through a bush. He moved in that direction, reviewing the patches of sand and sedge before him. He soon located the tracks of a deer. He pursued the line until he found some blood. And now on the trail of evidence, he located where a deer had fallen. Continuing, he found drag marks leading to an old hog pen where the deer was cached.

"I knew that the hunter wasn't about to come get that deer if my car was parked right next to his," he recalled thinking. So he walked back out of the swamp and again encountered the couple who invited him to stay for lunch. "No, he remembered telling them, "my wife has dinner at home." He thanked them and drove off.

Futch really did go home, some 30 minutes down the road. "As my wife and I ate, I told her what was happening." He said, "I think he'll run in there and get the deer."

Trying to best-time the next chapter, he then drove back to the swamp. At the point where the woods road hit the highway, he checked carefully for signs that the couple had left the area. Just as he hoped, they hadn't come out yet. Futch parked his patrol car nearby and took a stand in the underbrush near the intersection.

He didn't have long to wait, for moments later the car came down the road. As the driver slowed for the intersection, Futch heard the woman excitedly exclaim, "Whewww! We're in the clear!"

Futch ran to his patrol car and a few moments later stopped the formerly happy couple. Futch knew it was best to say nothing for a few seconds. "I know what you want," the man said during the highway encounter. With that, he opened the trunk to reveal the deer.

"He wanted to go straight to the judge, so I took him," the wildlife officer said. "He told me what a good job I had done in outsmarting him. He told the judge the Commission should have more officers like that!"

So ends Marshall's story, unless you know you are dealing with a lawman who had rather be one up. "By timing it carefully, I made the man carry that deer a mile and a half out of the swamp." he said, chuckling at the recollection.

Wildlife officers throughout the state have similar good fortune stories in making cases against those who violate wildlife and fisheries laws of Florida. A wide range of techniques are used but Marshall, who is generally known by his first name in the region he works, utilizes his tracking ability which becomes progressively more finely honed with the passing years in the back country.

"Marshall Futch," remarked one Commission staff member recently, "could track an Indian across a terrazzo floor."

Futch will quickly point out that he doesn't think his skill in this department is such a big deal. Learning to track was something he picked up by practice over the years and now uses as a handy tool in his work. It's not always the lawless he tracks down, but others as well who have gone into the woodlands for one reason or another.

"A fellow can train himself in the art of tracking. He has to want to do it," Futch said. Experience is the best teacher and to succeed, you need to know who you are tracking and where he is going. He has a destination and you need to know the general direction. If you give some leeway on where he might be going, such as with poachers, you could sum it up without much tracking." Marshall said his experience shows that the psyche of a lawbreaker comes out in the way he travels. "A nervous hunter will go places a normal person wouldn't, through a boggy place, for example. A calm man would go around it."

Futch added, "An escaped prisoner does not go

Dan Stainer

Tracks speak volumes to an experienced law enforcement officer.

through the same terrain as a hunter. His intentions are to evade people. He will go like a bear, straight through the rough places."

Knowing what a person is after is essential and, in the area of wildlife law enforcement, he said the art of tracking requires a knowledge of wildlife species and populations in the area.

Another important aspect of tracking people is to mentally put yourself in their place and then physically follow what direction they might be travelling, guided by "signs" on the ground and in the vegetation. Consistency does count, and one "for instance" he uses is that determining such a thing as how a person travels through woodlands — breaking limbs or pushing them aside — help determine what to look for.

Of course, obvious signs can abound. "Anyone can follow an obvious trail," he said. But he quickly adds that it is the illegal hunter thinking he can be one-up on a lawman who provides the best test of tracking skill.

"It's a challenge to me. A lot of people don't care about a challenge, never want one," he said. However, when it appears that someone is trapping illegally or night hunting or otherwise pursuing wildlife contrary to regulation, Futch charges in to pick up the gauntlet.

When he comes up on a situation that seems to bear investigation, Futch's first move is to try to grasp the various possibilities. A vehicle parked along a back road, for example, may mean anything from a game law violator on the prowl to a family enjoying an afternoon stroll in the woods.

Once he has read the obvious signs, and if it seems indicated, Futch may start following the trail of the party in question. His mind evaluates a series of impressions as he moves along the track. A broken twig, a crumbled leaf, a disturbed pine knot on the forest floor all have meaning to him.

"The outlaw doesn't care to leave a trail that could result in his arrest. I have seen them leave an obvious trail and then double back and go the other way. I've even seen a couple of cases where someone walked backwards across a dirt road."

Every detail is important when you're trying to track someone in the woods. Such things as the barking of squirrels or the sudden alarmed flight of a flock of birds, or the jeering call of a group of jays may mark the passage of the quarry. But the real key to tracking down law breakers is the fact that the obvious sometimes is not the important clue. One case that Futch points out occurred in his home county of Wakulla.

Suspicious that a certain individual was baiting turkeys, he was intent on finding out for certain. He could frequently find the fellow's truck track on a particular rural road. Marshall said the truck was being parked where the road dead-ended. It looked obvious that the man would walk straight into the woods from where he parked. Futch wasn't able to find any evidence of turkey baiting in the vicinity, however.

"I decided that he must be walking back down the road before entering the woods. I went back in that direction and soon saw where he'd tiptoed across. It didn't take too much effort to locate a blind and empty shells, along with scattered grain."

The next day he checked the road and found where the truck had gone in and not come out. His timing was perfect. He walked toward the blind. "I kept small pines between me and him until I got close enough so he wouldn't have time to run." The rest was routine.

The 53-year old wildlife officer has made many cases for the Commission against violators of wildlife and fisheries laws, and has an adamant philosophy about it all.

"It's really up to the people," he says. "We work eight of every 24 hours and we probably catch only a small percent of the violators. People will have to take time to become concerned that the violators are stealing something that belongs to all of us. However, it is really up to the hunters and fishermen out there to help keep violations down. A fellow sportsman willing to testify against a violator, well, that's worth a lot more than one of us straight out catching someone." □

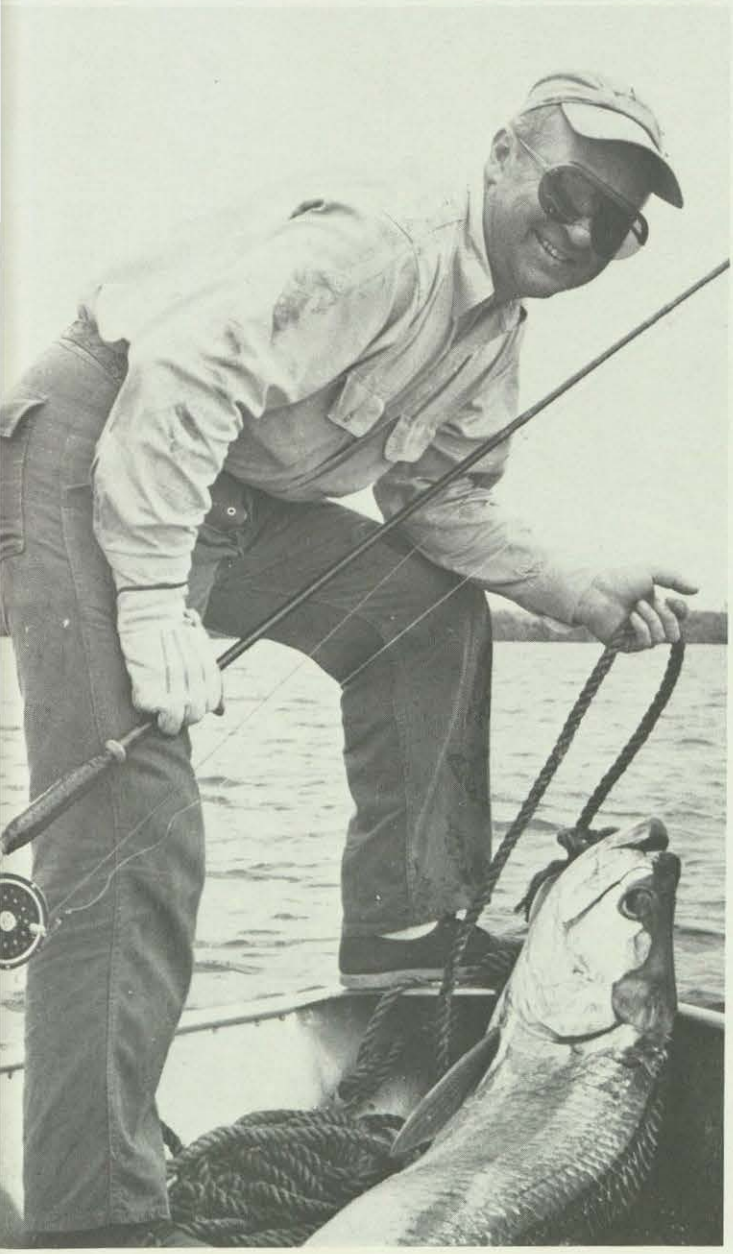
FISHING

My greatest fishing thrills

By CHARLES WATERMAN

While we're dealing in ancient history I am intrigued by somebody else's theme — "My Greatest Fishing Thrill." While other less considerate authors might bombard you for long chapters with their adventures, I promise to keep my five greatest kicks (not necessarily in order of importance) to less than two typewritten pages. My condensation of these epics is done with the realization that they were my thrills, not yours, and that you would be fed up with them if they run very long. Humor me.

Charles Waterman



The first of the biggies happened in a railroad tank pond in Kansas during duck season and I think I was about 14 years old. I had never seen a bass over two pounds at that time and when the ducks didn't fly (they seldom did) I took my tubular steel casting rod and my Shakespeare Precision reel and started casting a rainbow colored, jointed Heddon Game Fisher. I caught a 5-pound bass and when I first sighted it I was sure I had a new world's record.

Then there was my first bonefish on a fly. I had been determined to catch it without the aid of a guide and spent something like six weeks of misadventure before getting one in hand. I broke off several. That was at Key Largo and the year was about 1953.

My first flyrod tarpon over 70 pounds came after long and arduous effort, using makeshift gear. I was fishing a long way out from Everglades City, had been at it for days and had almost worn out my welcome with the long-suffering friends who helped me. The late Bob Budd, casting champion, did the gaffing but thought I had lost my mind. The rod was made from a surf pole and the leader tippet was wire. I wasn't fooling.

I've caught some healthy steelhead on a fly but the biggest one (23 pounds) came at a mighty opportune time. I had gone to the Kispiox River in British Columbia to do a story for *Field & Stream* because nearly all of the prizewinning flyrod steelies of the time were being hooked in the Kispiox. My purpose was to interview and photograph the champion steelheaders but I fished too and caught the big fish after several days. For a while it looked as if *Field & Stream's* emissary was going to bring back both the story *and* the championship, but late entries wiped me out. My fish was heavy enough to have won in other years. That was in 1966.

And in New Zealand I caught a big brown trout of 5 or 6 pounds on a tiny dry fly in an impossible situation — a roaring river with the fish hooked in a little patch of calm water amid a log jam. I was hidden in the bushes and he was worn out before he really got scared and started fighting.

Now see, I didn't take long. I feel great about it and it didn't hurt you at all.

Many years ago, author landed his first big flyrod tarpon, using makeshift equipment. Note leather glove for line handling. Reel had little drag.

Jiggerbobbing

The art isn't completely forgotten. I know of a few Floridians who occasionally practice "jiggerbobbing," or whatever you want to call it.

It may be that "bobbing" is the oldest form of artificial lure fishing for bass. It was mentioned back in 1764 when Bartram wrote of its use in Florida. No telling how long it had been done before that. It's possible the Indians introduced it to the settlers but don't quote me. I'm guessing.

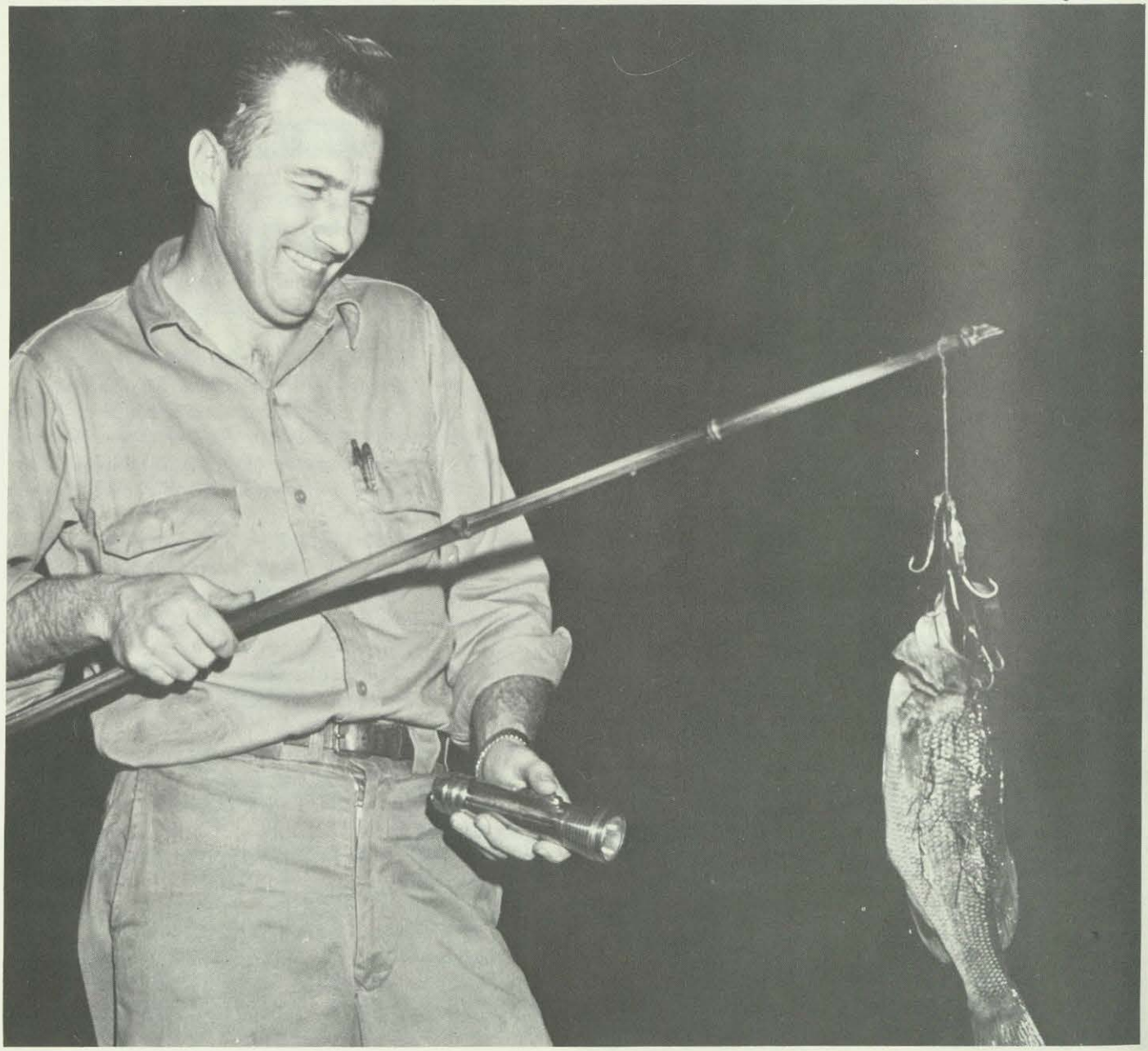
Bass fishing had a slow start in the U.S., never getting much attention until after the Kentuckians built fine multiplying reels and learned to cast live baits delicately with long native cane poles. That was just after 1800. At that time the Florida "bob" was considered a crude method and not sporting at all. The first bobs were described as bunches of white hair from a deer's tail, lashed together with some feathers and fastened to big hooks.

The early drill was to wave the lure around on about 20 inches of heavy line attached to a 10- or 12-foot pole, keeping it a little above the water most of the time and lowering it occasionally. The skiff or canoe was moved slowly along shorelines. A little of that has been done in recent years but the more modern method is to use a much shorter line and keep the lure in the water almost constantly — a continual surface gurgling and splashing with the tip of the pole contributing to the fuss. A hooked fish is brought in hand-over-hand.

A few years back there was advertising of the

Successful "jiggerbobber" with a bass caught at night, a good time for this kind of fishing. It's hard work. Constant movement of the pole and lure can be hard on the wrists.

Wallace Hughes



method — with refinements — and I suspect somebody netted a bundle. But although old timers sneered that there was nothing new in the come-on, the instruction and equipment you paid for was complete and practical and probably worth the investment if you wanted to bob seriously and didn't have time to work out your own system.

Most of the bobbers I have known preferred to operate at night, often a good time to catch bass by other methods, too. But if the moon isn't working it's hard to cast tightly against a bank or weed bed and working the edges is easy with the bob.

It can be pretty hard work. Most of the practitioners sit in the bow of the boat with their hands holding the pole and resting on their knees. The constant pole jiggling can be hard on your wrists.

Constant movement of the pole keeps the surface broken so that the pole and boat aren't seen by the bass. Rowing or paddling, of course, was the original method but an electric motor would be perfect.

All sorts of things have been used as bobbing lures and a popular one at one time was cut from leather, sometimes in the shape of a juvenile alligator. The way it was gurgled through the water probably prevented bass from admiring the gator silhouette but that shape was good as any, the tail and legs adding to the attraction.

And now, breathless readers, a comment on my own experiences. I never caught a big bass with a jigger pole but many years ago I thought it should work on snook. After all, there is a closely related system known as "figure-eighting" often practiced from bridges and piers. In "figure-eighting" the fisherman uses a long pole with a lure fastened to a short wire line and he leans over the rail and thrashes the outfit in a figure eight on the surface. A variety of lures (including old glass insulators) have been used for this. Catches some big snook.

Well, I made my bob out of a fistful of long chicken feathers and browbeat my wife into rowing me through a narrow mangrove creek. I never did catch a big snook although one busted off my bob. I *did* get a small one. It was less fun than a casting rod or a flyrod but I hoped the world was waiting for my account, so we set up some pictures and I wrote an article for somebody.

At that time the Florida Development Commission was buying brief fishing pieces together with photographs for tourist promotion and I sold them a posed picture of me yanking the snook around with the pole. Recipients of these publicity prints had all rights to the things and one tackle company turned an artist loose on it. He changed my jigger pole into a flyrod and my anonymous fame went on and on.

Miniatures

Just how light a lure?

After tenacious experimentation I have concluded that there is no use trying to use a baitcasting reel with lures of less than ¼ ounce, no matter how light the rod or line. My latest efforts were with a miniature spincasting rod. I just took off the closed-face reel and clamped on the fastest, lightest plugging reel I could find with a little 6-pound line. I put on an eighth-ounce weight and the outfit worked lousy. Pretty good with a quarter ounce.

Of late there have been quite a number of miniature pushbutton spinning reels that handle lures down to about a sixteenth of an ounce, and some of them are sold with miniature rods to match. Nothing is handier for delivering panfish lures — tiny spinner combinations, spinnerbaits and plugs. The most popular form comes with the reel mounted on top of the rod handle.

Accuracy is reduced by the necessity of thumbing mechanically. Admittedly, it is possible to feather the cast to some extent, but the most accurate closed-face outfits are those that hang below the rod with the line itself controlled by a forefinger — the reel behind the hand.

Perhaps the reviving popularity of plugcasting has contributed; perhaps it's simply easier to operate a thumb than a forefinger. For whatever reason, the most popular closed-face reels are thumb-operated.

But when it comes down to the real teenies for panfish, you can throw lighter lures with a conventional open-faced spinning outfit. Using 2 or 4-pound line it's possible to get by at close range with a bait that weighs only 1/32 ounce.

Such infinitesimal baits may not make much of an impression on bass but I've seen times when they were winners on big bluegills and the like — beating heavier things badly.

Have Bass Changed?

People, pollution and pressure?

I don't like the reported changes in bass tastes. Personally, I've found it harder and harder to catch good fish on artificials in the spots I frequent. For a long time I was a little miffed that plastic worms had taken over so solidly in places where I used to rely on surface and near-surface lures.

Now I can't help it that I like some other methods better than plastic worming. This is partly sour grapes because I'm not much of a worm fisherman, but I've been hearing something else lately — the insistence that live bait is necessary in places where the plastic worms had taken over from plugs and spoons.

A fisherman from New Jersey called to complain that Florida guides troll shiners and insist other methods aren't satisfactory. At risk of sounding anti-live-bait I'm just a little unhappy about this. Have the bass changed? Are there just fewer of them? What happened?

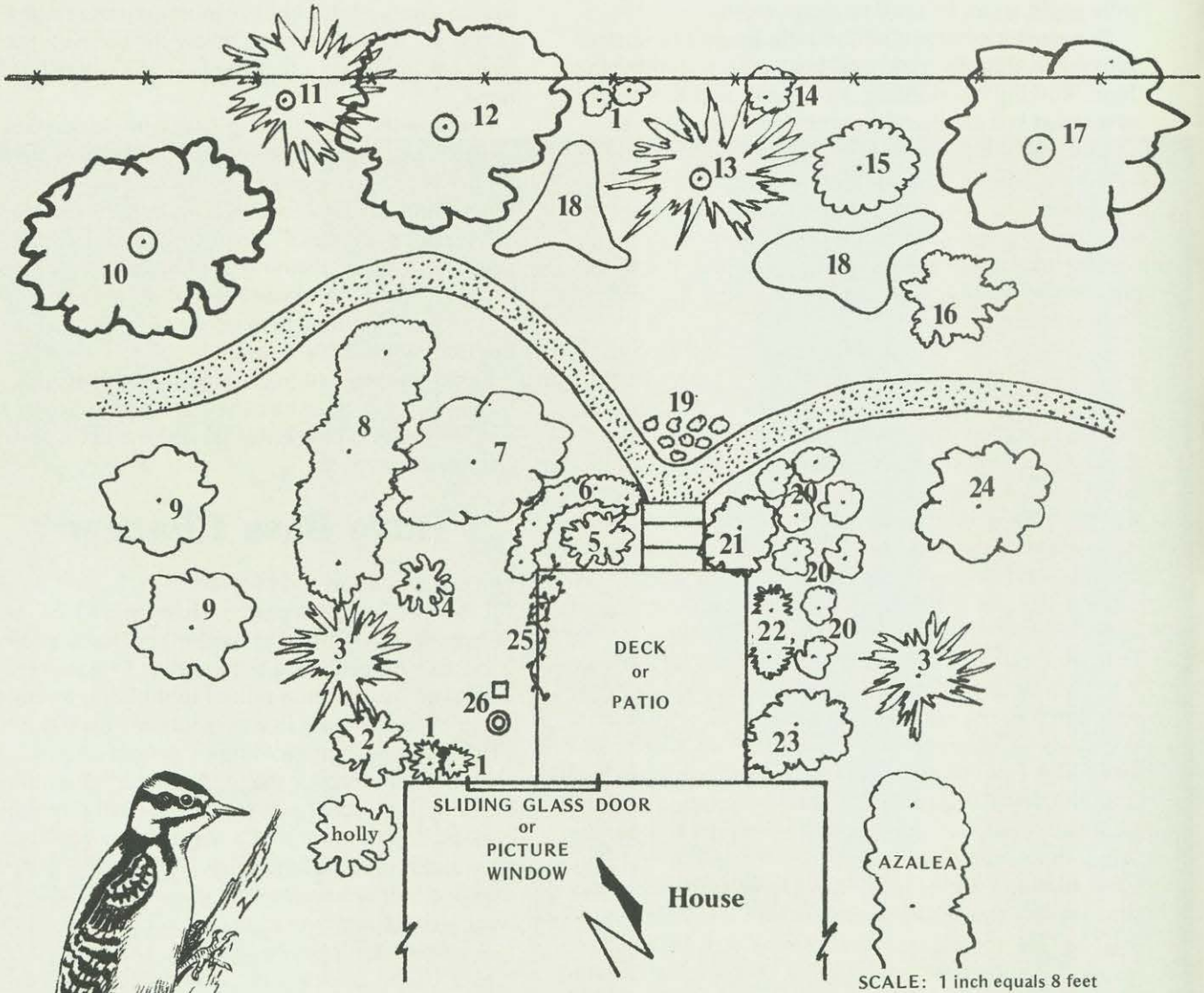
Of course the easy fish are picked off these days with more fishing pressure. That's to be expected. And fishermen are better than ever. *Most* of the time we ignorant, old-fashioned plug, bug and spoon throwers aren't doing as well as we used to.

Who should I see about this? □

INVITE BIRDS to

My father, pushing 70, is hooked. So is my three-year old nephew. Dad spends more than $100 each year pursuing a simple hobby that brings great warmth and pleasure into his life. Although cardinals, brilliant in their red and russet hues, remain his favorites, he is challenged to bring downy woodpeckers, ruby-crowned kinglets, goldfinch, orioles and hummingbirds to his gardens. Young Michael, eyes wide in wonder, delights in watching the birds at our feeder. Young and old, they are just two among the millions of backyard birders in the United States. What is so special about this hobby?

Backyard birding is more than just compiling a list of species that one observes. It is making one's own



1. nandina
2. podocarpus
3. pyracantha
4. elderberry
5. native azalea
6. dwarf blueberry
7. blue beech
8. wax myrtle
9. grandfather's beard tree
10. sugarberry
11. spruce pine
12. sweetgum
13. Atlantic white cedar
14. hearts-a-bustin'
15. Florida anise
16. yaupon holly, female
17. black cherry
18. wildflower garden
19. columbine
20. leucothoe
21. gallberry
22. Oregon grape
23. mountain laurel
24. rusty blackhaw
25. coral honeysuckle
26. feeder or bird bath

YOUR HOME

Donna Legare

Tufted titmouse is a common visitor to the author's feeding station.

By DONNA LEGARE

discoveries, gaining insight into the daily lives of other living creatures and feeling the amazement that comes with each new discovery.

The formula for attracting birds throughout the year is simple. Provide year-round sources of food and water and places in which the birds can safely roost, hide and raise their young. Whether you rent a small apartment with a garden terrace, dwell in a suburban house or live on a small acreage homesite or farm, you can make habitat improvements to attract birds to your yard.

Planting For Food and Cover

When choosing plants for your yard, consider their wildlife food value. Fleshy fruit and berry trees such as dogwood, mulberry, and wild cherry first come to mind, but the dry hard seeds of the pines, oaks, and sweetgum are also excellent food sources. Select a variety of trees and shrubs that bear during different seasons to provide food throughout the year.

You may want to draw a simple landscape plan like the one on the opposite page that can be followed over the years.

In selecting and arranging plants, also consider their seasonal color, textures and shapes as well as your personal needs. Do you require privacy? Room for play? A flower or vegetable garden? Your needs can be met while also satisfying the birds. For instance, plant a food-producing privacy hedge of wax myrtle and holly or a flower garden that includes columbine, coral honeysuckle and salvia for the hummingbirds.

Here are a few other ways to enhance your "backyard habitat":

◆ Before clearing away all the "weeds" in your yard, find out which ones are valuable food sources. The deep purple berries of the American beautyberry add color to your garden and are favorites of the mockingbird as well. Elderberry, pokeweed and Virginia creeper vine are considered by many to be weeds, but

PLANTS WITH WILDLIFE FOOD VALUE

TREES	SEASON	EVERGREEN or DECIDUOUS
wild cherry	S	D
cherry laurel	W	E
dogwood	F,W	D
holly* (American, dahoon, yaupon)	W	E
pines	F,W	E
oaks	F,W	E & D
mulberry	Sp,S	D
crabapple	S	D
hackberry* (sugar berry)	S	D
persimmon*	S	D
blackgum	F	D
sweetgum	W	D
red cedar	F,W	E
maple	W,Sp	D
SHRUBS		
elderberry	S	D
pokeweed	S,F	D
pyracantha	F,W	E
wax myrtle*	F,W	E
dewberries, blackberry	Sp,S	D
blueberry	S	semi-D
oregon grape	W,Sp	E
American beauty-berry	F	D
rusty blackhaw (native viburnum)	S	D
sumac	S	D
nandina	F,W	E
VINES		
Virginia creeper	F	D
Smilax	S,F	E
coral honeysuckle •	Sp,S	E
trumpet vine •	S	E

*only female plants bear fruit • flowers-hummingbirds

all are excellent food sources and can be quite beautiful in the landscape.

◆ Placing a nest box in the proper spot, or better yet, leaving dead trees standing, if not potentially hazardous, will encourage chickadees, titmice, woodpeckers and other cavity nesters to nest in your yard. Rotting wood also harbors insects that the birds will feed on.

◆ Plant several evergreen trees and shrubs which provide protection from predators and harsh weather.

◆ Build a brushpile in a back corner of your yard. Pile hedge clippings and limbs and discarded Christmas trees there. A simple brushpile becomes a hideaway for wrens and brown thrashers and provides emergency cover from predators such as dogs, cats and hawks.

◆ Provide a batch of exposed soil for dusting.

◆ Birds prefer transitional areas known as "edge." A lawn or meadow bordering a hedgerow or woods is preferable to dense woods or a large lawn with no hedges or borders. Increase the edge effect by:

- creating woodland islands in your lawn
- growing patches of wildflowers
- planting a natural border of dogwood, wax myrtle and holly between your yard and that of your neighbor.

BEAUTY BERRY—Favorite of the mockingbird Morrie Naggiar

The Feeding Station

Feeding not only supplements natural food but also enables you to enjoy the birds at close range. Once again, variety is the key principle to success.

I offer a seed mixture, consisting of sunflower, finely cracked corn and white millet, and a suet cupcake on a platform feeder. Sunflower seed and niger (thistle) seed are dispensed from specialty feeders and suet cakes are hung in nearby trees.

This fall I arranged several boughs of wax myrtle laden with berries in an oak splint basket and set it out on my front porch. I now have daily visitors — ruby-crowned kinglets and myrtle warblers feasting on the berries.

Use the chart to guide you in feeding. Note that cardinals will feed on cracked corn but they will always extract the more expensive sunflower from the mixed seed first.

Don't be discouraged if the birds don't find your feeder right away; they have to see it first. Try throwing some seed and bits of white bread on the ground around the feeder. If they still don't find it, try moving the feeder.

Water

No feeding station is complete without water for drinking and bathing. When natural food is abundant in summer and autumn and birds visit the feeder less frequently, you can still enjoy birds at your window by providing them a source of water.

BLUE JAY—Common feeding station visitor Wallace Hughes

It need not be elaborate. A simple clay flowerpot saucer set on a stump is very effective. Birdbaths too are good. Even a garbage can lid slightly sunk into the ground makes an excellent birdbath, but if cats hunt in the area, it is better to have the bath off the ground and in the open.

For a more naturalistic effect, create a shallow pool lined with heavy clay soil and install a hidden hose with a mist nozzle attachment that will spray a fine mist of water into the pool. The pool will drain each night when the mist is shut off and algae will not become a problem as it is in a cement pool. Birds delight in a mist bath and we humans delight in watching them splash and fluff in water.

Backyard birding is not without frustration. There are ingenious and resourceful squirrels to outwit, neighborhood cats to discourage and lots of hard work in planning and planting a yardful of beneficial trees and shrubs. The payoff is hours of enjoyment, the thrill of seeing and listening to a colorful menagerie of birds just five feet from your window and the feeling of contentment in knowing that you have made life just a little bit more hospitable to feathered creatures with whom we share the earth. □

BROWN-HEADED NUTHATCH—Nesting in dead tree Donna Legare

FEEDING GUIDE

bobwhite	cracked corn
mourning dove	cracked corn, millet
ruby-throated hummingbird	sugar water (1:4)
woodpeckers	suet cake
blue jay	sunflower seed, cracked corn, suet cake
Carolina chickadee nuthatches tufted titmouse	sunflower seed, suet cake, nut bits
Carolina wren	suet cake, nut bits
mockingbird brown thrasher	hulled sunflower seed, suet cake, raisins, doughnuts, berries, chopped fruit
catbird	chopped fruit
ruby-crowned kinglet pine warbler yellow-rumped (myrtle) warbler yellow-throated warbler orange-crowned warbler	suet cakes, nut bits, wax myrtle berries
northern oriole	chopped fruit, suet cakes, doughnuts, sugar water
cardinal	sunflower seed, cracked corn
purple finch American goldfinch	niger (thistle) seed, sunflower seed, nut bits
rufous-sided towhee	cracked corn
white-throated sparrow chipping sparrow	cracked corn, millet

SUET CAKE

2 cups melted suet
2 cups cornmeal
3 tablespoons peanut butter
a few handfuls of mixed seed

Mix ingredients together, pour into cupcake tins and freeze until needed.

THIS IS BASS FISHING

You never lose when you go bass fishing! Oh, you may come home without any fish, or even a strike, but there's always next time. If you spend time on a remote creek, a lonesome river or even a suburban lake, you have spent your time wisely. Perhaps there were herons to watch or sunning terrapins and maybe

Sometimes a basser's dreams come true, right. A 'gator, below, eyes a fisherman and vice versa—it's part of the fisherman's world.

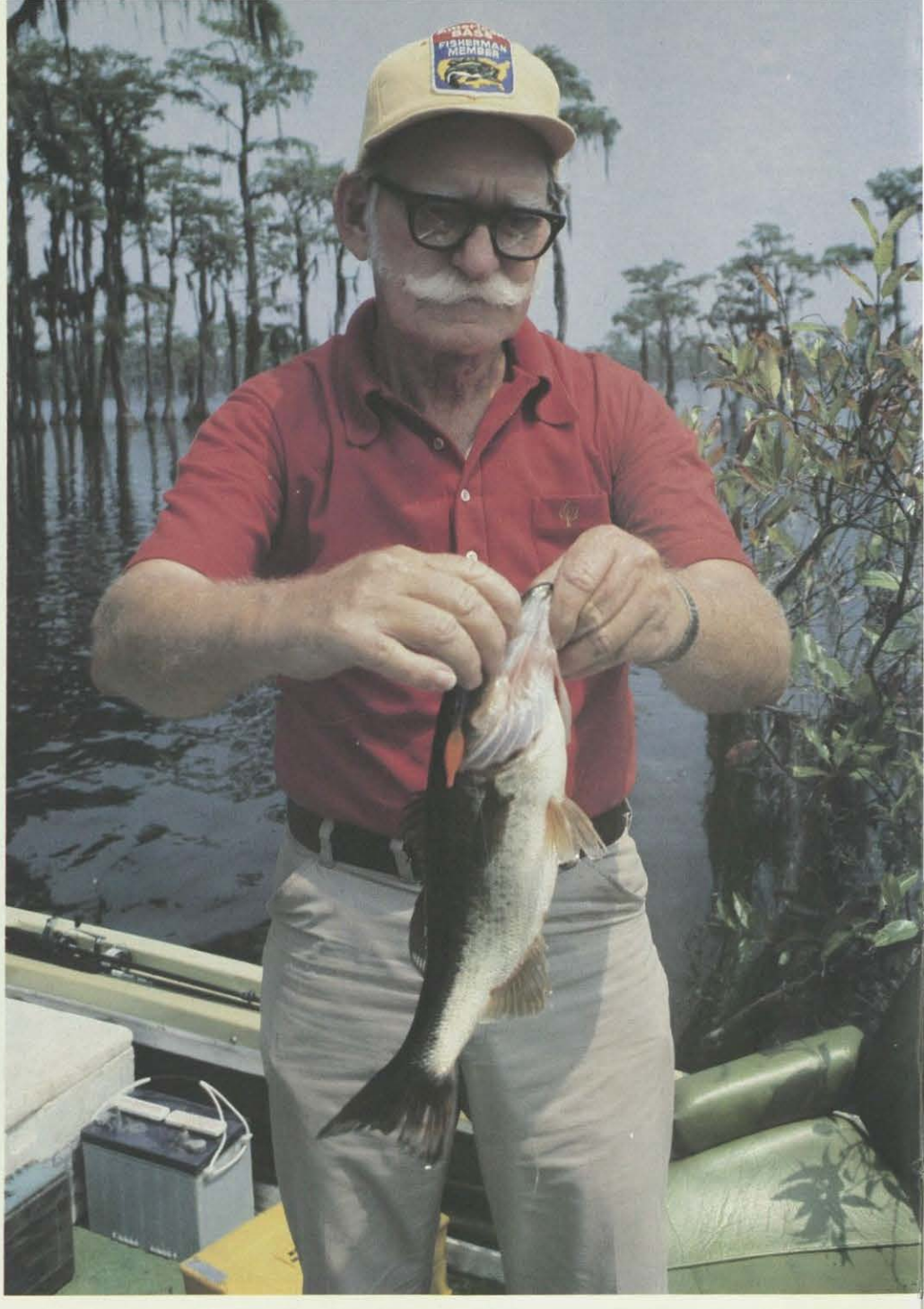
Elizabeth T. Adler

Charles Dickey

an alligator looked through you and slowly sank into the depths.
When you go fishing, there are many marvels besides bass. There is the enthusiasm of a young lad on his first bass trip, exploding with energy but short of patience. There may be an old man, shy of energy but loaded with tolerance. Although he may not have much time left, he knows how he wants to spend it. Bass fishing brings out hope. We yearn and dream for the day when an old female bass, fat from shiners, strikes our plug and we hook her just right. She comes spraying out of the water and we know that she is a trophy, the right size

By CHARLES DICKEY

THIS IS



for showing all over town and mounting for our den wall. She dives for the bottom and an old stump. The drag gives and the reel hums. We bend backwards with the rod, cranking desperately and silently praying that the bass does not hang or cut the line. Suddenly, the monster heads for the surface and there is another jump, the big head shaking wildly to throw the plug. And then we begin to work the tiring fish towards the boat where our buddy waits with the net. He makes a sudden lunge. The

bass is entangled in webbing and hoisted safely aboard. We sit down and tremble awhile, our hands so shaky we are afraid to reach for our prize. Bass fishing teaches us gratitude. We learn to be grateful for all small favors. For on most days the bass we catch are small to medium ones, not the old stump-draggers we dream about. Although we may throw the small fish back, we are grateful for their strikes. The bass, the boat, the tackle and the companionship are what bring us again

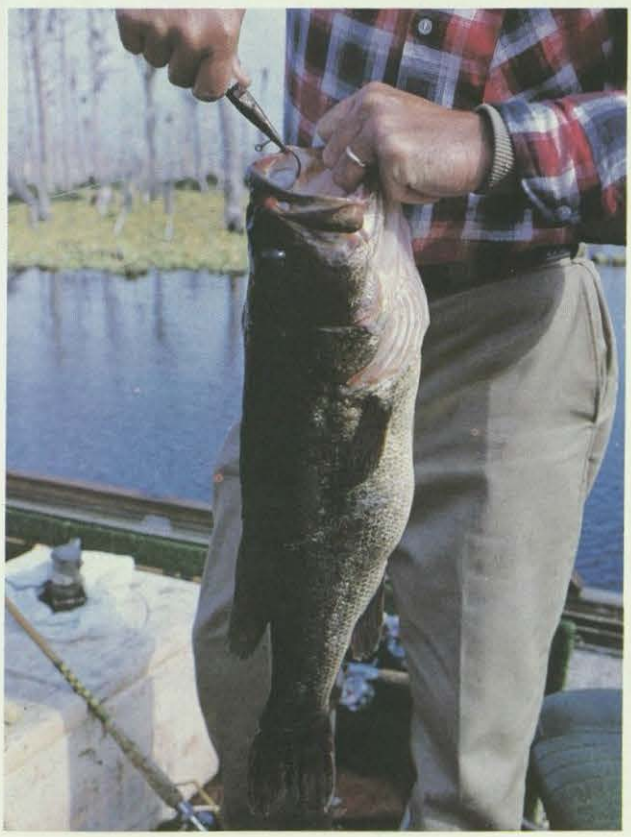
BASS FISHING

Photos by Charles Dickey

and again to the rivers and lakes. But what keeps us there is the continual outdoor movie. The dawn patrol, where you watch the world wake up, is different each morning. Gathering storm clouds can make you retreat from the lake but you know the cooling rain may be followed by hungry bass feeding on the surface. The cumulus clouds of a sunny afternoon, like huge piles of fluffy cotton, cause the light to change and there's a constantly varying picture. Sunset, when the wind begins to vanish, sprays vivid colors across the sky and deep shadows into the water.

THIS IS BASS FISHING

Photos By Charles Dickey



It's all there for those who care to take the time to see, a free show and a different one every day of the year. We all like it better when the fish are biting and the stringer fills up, but there's no way we can lose — even when we never get a bite! □

Barred owl

Jim Greene

JIM GREENE

By Trisha Spillan

FOCUSING ON WILDLIFE

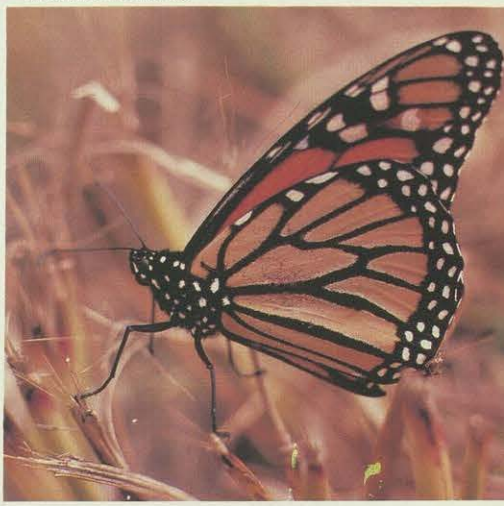
Some 10 years ago during a meeting at his place of employment, Jim Greene had an experience which changed his life. It wasn't a religious one; he didn't see visions or stars. Instead, it was what he didn't see that had the effect upon him.

Greene was suddenly afflicted with tunnel vision, a condition associated with a severe migraine headache. This headache, the doctor said, and the accompanying loss of part of his vision was due to stress. The young man was strongly advised to find a way to get rid of whatever pressure was building.

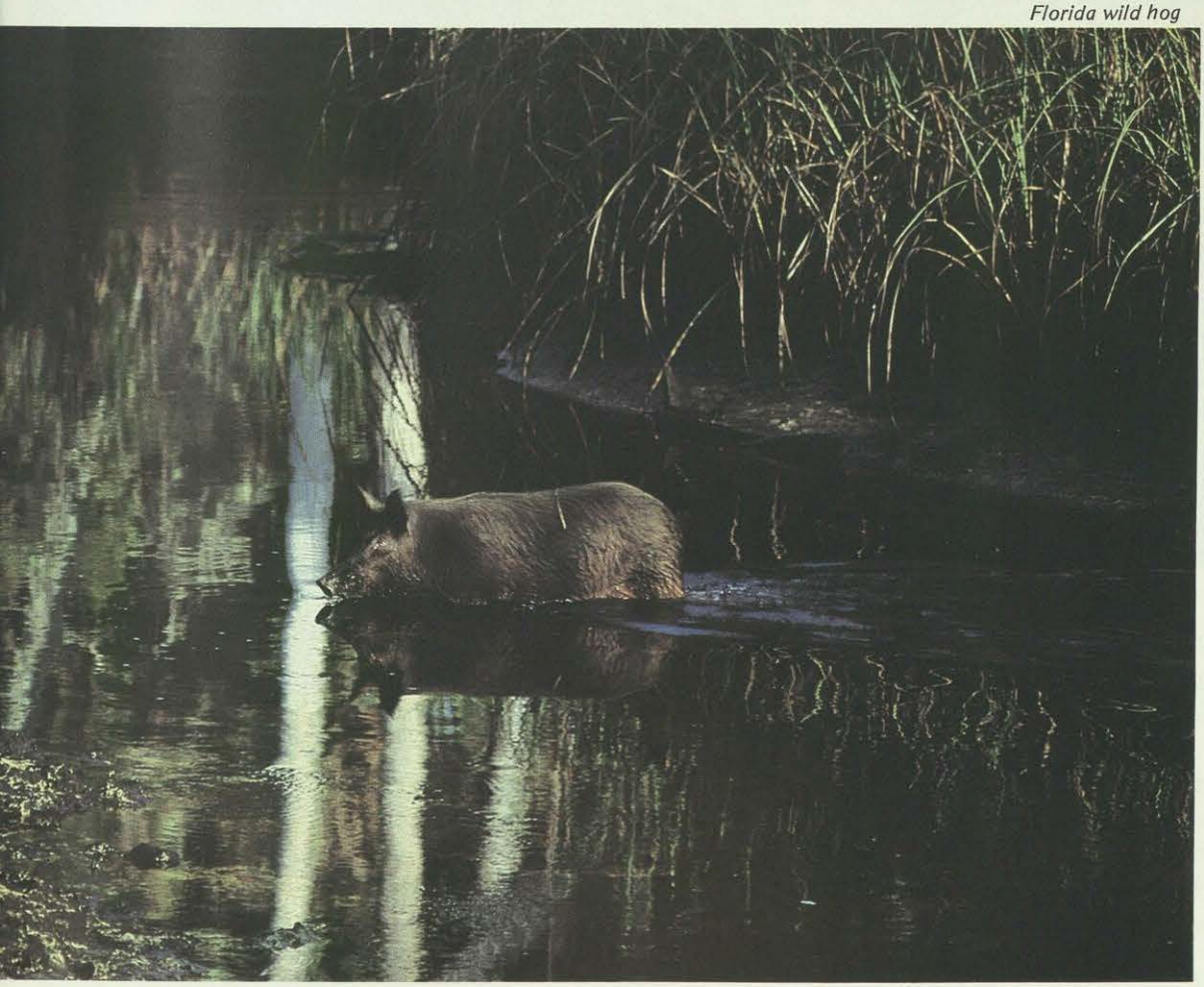
So Greene did. He took to the woods with a camera and the readers of FLORIDA WILDLIFE have benefitted from the move. For, since that time, Greene's color photography has graced the

Florida gallinule family

Monarch butterfly



Florida wild hog



JIM GREENE

Pintail ducks

Cardinal

pages of this publication on innumerable occasions.

"It is very difficult to worry about bills and someone screaming at you when the mosquitoes are biting your neck or alligators are swimming around you," observed the 39-year-old professor.

Most any clear weekend you can look for Greene somewhere in the St. Marks Refuge south of Tallahassee. He drives the 20-odd miles from his home, then bicycles into the area he wishes to photograph.

"It's a fantastic microcosm of the entire Big Bend area," Greene said of the refuge. "It takes time to learn all the aspects of it."

On his photographic jaunts he utilizes a "blind of sorts," a contraption of mosquito netting which helps disguise his human form. At times, he admits the camouflage might work too well. Once a young wild hog bumped into him and Greene had to kick him out of the way.

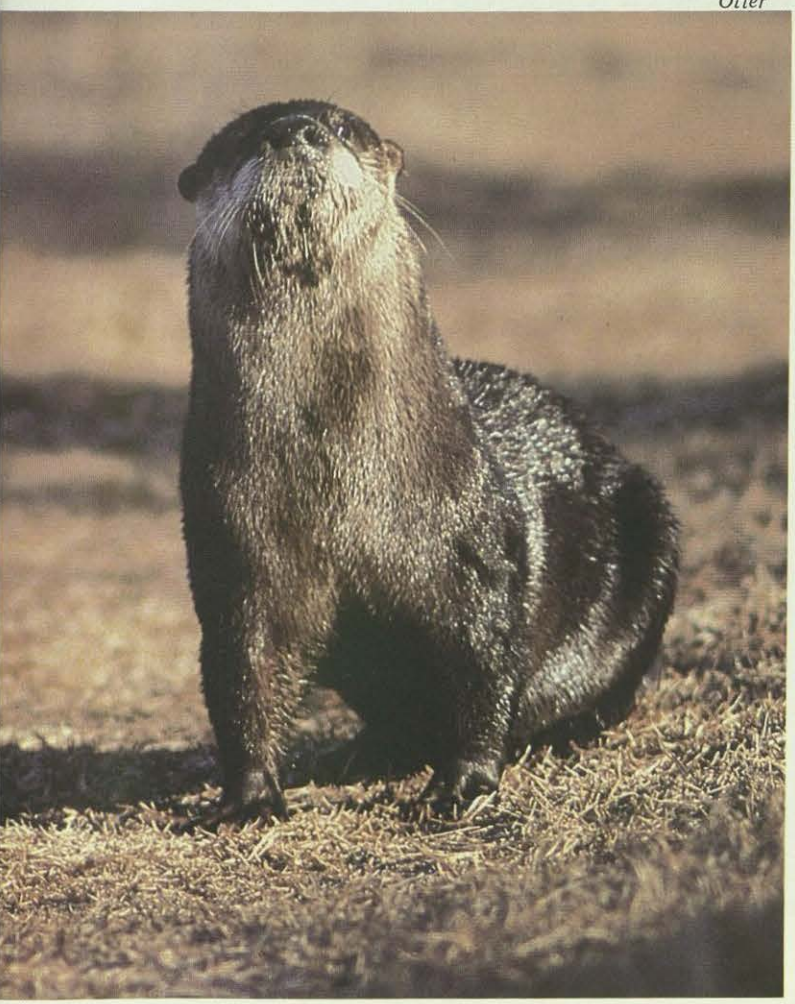
Once behind the camera, the biology and chem-

istry professor admits to a slight alteration in personality. "As a photographer, I know no fear. I can't get too close to wildlife where, as Jim Greene, I would be scared to death. I assume a completely different personality."

This alter ego has come close to getting Greene in hot water. One spring in a rookery pond which was swollen from its normal half acre to about 25 acres, the intrepid photographer was above his knees in water trying to get close to the birds. He knew there was one alligator in the brackish water but, with his attention riveted to the birds, he failed to notice the second one until it had advanced to within 10 feet of him.

Ruby-throated hummingbird

Otter



Black-bellied plover

Focusing On Wildlife

Gray fox

Opossum

JIM GREENE

"For a moment I stared eyeball to eyeball at that menacing presence, then jumped onto a stump that was close by," he recalled. "That gator really got my attention. I assume he left the area because I sure as heck did."

Given a choice, Greene would concentrate on birds as his favorite subject as they move more in a three-dimensional plane. They are the prime subjects in the more than 3,000 slides he keeps on file at his home.

"I can remember every one of those slides and the situation in which it was taken," he said. Those slides also serve as proof to his wife that he really has been out in the swamps and woodlands on the weekends.

Greene began his wildlife photography as a release mechanism. It was in 1974 that the professor at Tallahassee Community College walked into the offices of FLORIDA WILDLIFE with a batch of his favorite slides.

Shortly thereafter his name was added to the masthead as a contributing photographer. The

Boat-tailed grackle

Focusing On Wildlife

cover of the July-August 1979 issue of the magazine was one of his, that of a deer in velvet.

For at least a year, though, Greene has a different kind of wildlife to study and possibly photograph. Last September, he took a leave of absence from his post at TCC to accept a congressional fellowship as a science advisor to the Science and Technology Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives.

His tenure there reflects the avid interest Greene has in life around him, whether two- or four-legged. After obtaining his doctoral degree in organic chemistry at Virginia Tech, he moved to Tallahassee and became active in the political scene, mostly in the background as a volunteer legislative aide. A concern for what occurs in the political arena as well as the natural sciences is just one of the things he tries to pass on to this students.

Would he ever consider giving up teaching and trying to make a living at photographing wildlife?

"I wouldn't mind, in the future, doing this full-time, but it might lose the fun if it got too serious," he said. □

Rat snake

Large flock dots Florida sky

Melopsittacus undu- WHAT?

They're your basic dimestore parakeets, *Melopsittacus undulatus*, commonly known as budgerigars or budgies. Native to the arid grasslands of Australia, these colorful, noisy psittacines have found a home in Florida and it looks like they're here to stay. Budgies have escaped from or been released by parakeet breeders, tourist attraction operators and pet owners a multitude of times in a myriad of places throughout the state. They have accepted Florida's southern hospitality by readily exchanging the harsh desert conditions of their homeland and the confines of aviaries for all the amenities suburbia has to offer.

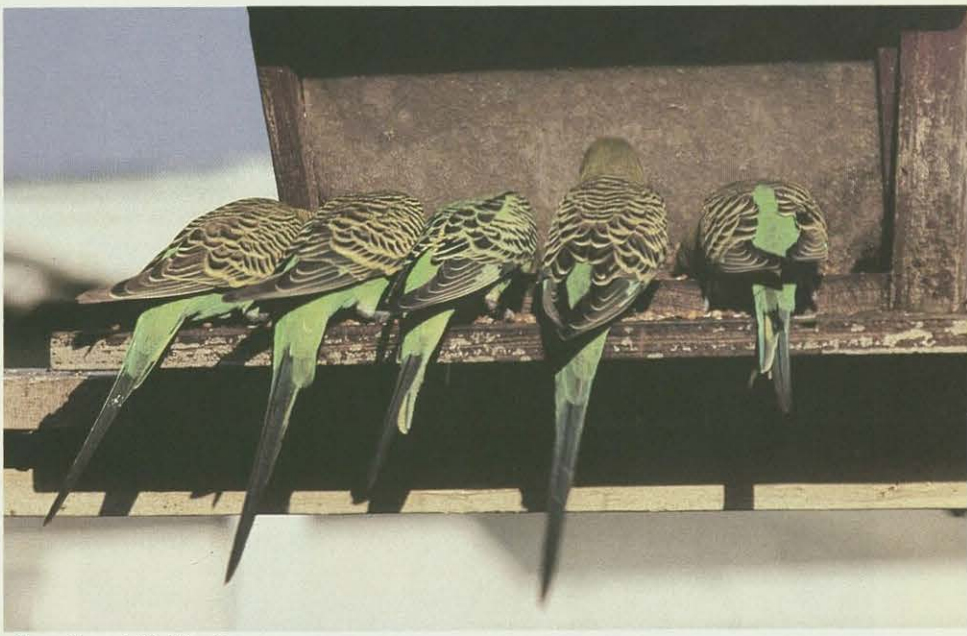
Food is never in short supply in many neighborhoods; there's always a bird feeder crammed full nearby.

These exotics nest in holes in trees in their native habitat. Natural cavities are used in Florida, but why rough it when manmade nest boxes, street lamps and boat davits abound?

Florida's agreeable climate and these luxurious conditions have enabled "backyard budgies" to breed nine months a year, rearing as many as five broods in that time. No wonder budgies are so numerous in many parts of the state. Roosts can contain as many as 8,000 birds and the racket produced by these loquacious parakeets must be heard to be believed. As we

Story & photographs by ANNE SHAPIRO

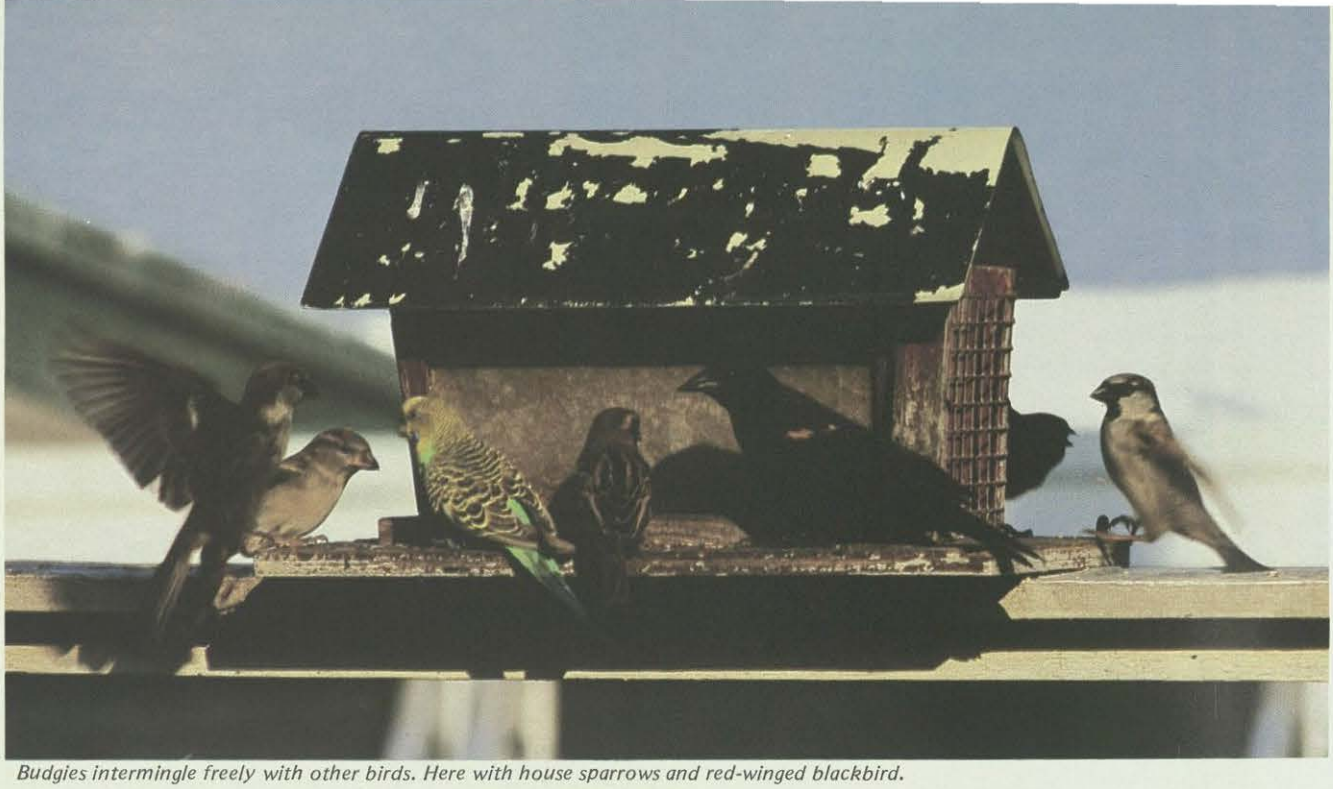
have learned from bitter experience with walking catfish, starlings, house sparrows, hydrilla, and fire ants, to name a few, exotics usually spell trouble. They are ecological disrupters which may compete with native species, transmit and/or introduce diseases, become agricultural pests and generally wreak havoc in other ways with the natural balance of a susceptible ecosystem. The budgerigar may be no exception. This parakeet, by virtue of its enormous numbers, gregar-



Chowtime at bird feeder

Nesting boxes

Budgerigar pair



Budgies intermingle freely with other birds. Here with house sparrows and red-winged blackbird.

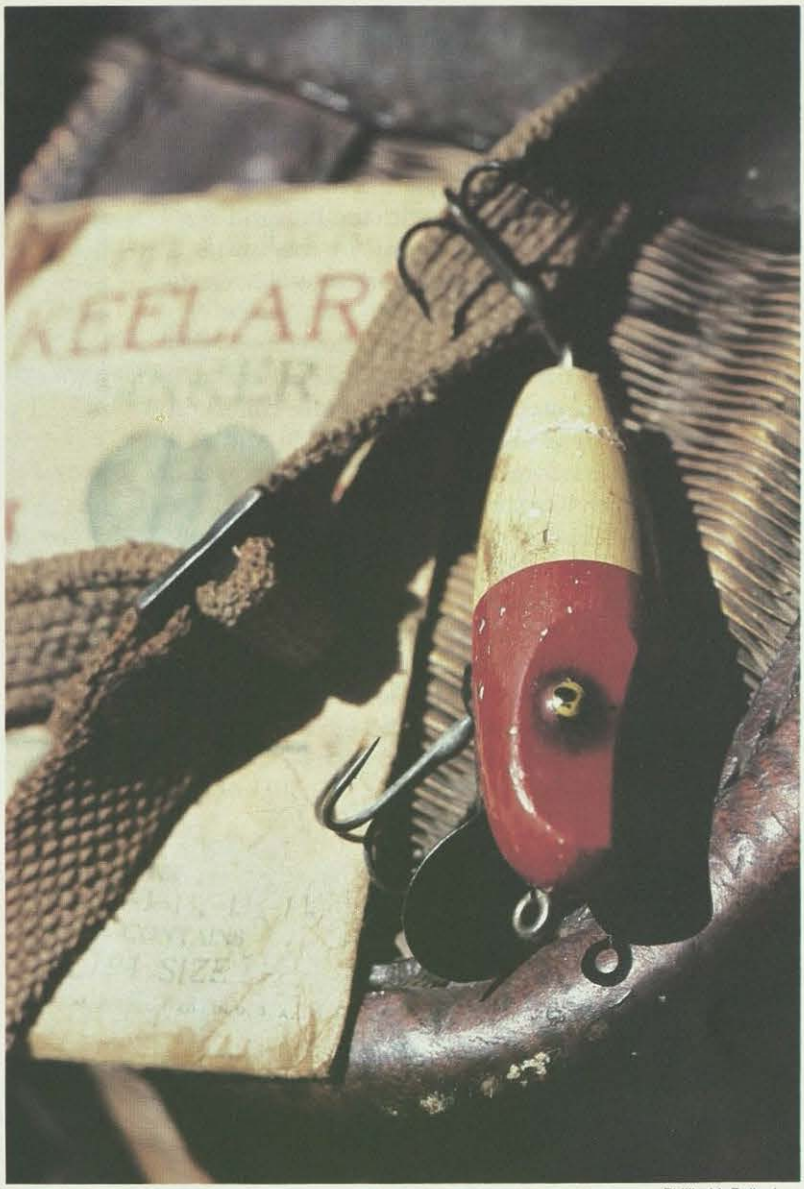
ious habits, and innate aggressiveness, may displace our native woodpeckers and other cavity nesters from nest sites in suburban areas.

Competition for food at feeding stations is unlikely, but budgies intermingle freely and flock readily with other birds. This social tendency may facilitate the transmission of diseases, even to man who is never far away. Budgies are colorful, charming parakeets, as proven by the fact that they are the most popular caged bird world wide. Unfortunately, free-flying individuals are often pampered at the expense of our native denizen. In addition, pro-exotic sentiments may encourage people to release ever more non-native species, with potentially disastrous consequences. And, finally, the budgerigar may tire of "the good life" in suburbia and strike out for less man-dominated habitats. What additional problems that could arise are anybody's guess. □

Roost trees may hold as many as 8,000 birds.

A plug very similar in design to the classic River Runt. This Paw Paw Bait Company plug is called Lippy Joe.

The Lore of the Lure



Phillip M. Pollock

In 1890, James Heddon whittled quietly on a bit of wood while waiting for a friend to join him in a fishing adventure. It was a simple bit of jackknife doodling. Short and cylindrical in form, narrow at one end and broad at the other. Casually he tossed the piece of wood into the water. Legend has it that a largemouth bass struck the object with a violent attack that sent the spray flying.

Stories like this are apt to pick up embellishments in the repeating. This one is probably no exception. At any rate, because his initial carvings were in a tapered cylindrical form, similar to a bottle stopper or plug, the term "plug" was applied to the enticers which he began to whittle for himself and friends. The demand for the plugs began to grow and by 1910, Heddon's efforts were directed toward producing the lures in commercial quantities.

Man has used artificial lures of one kind or another since far back beyond earliest recorded history. But it wasn't long before word of Heddon's "new idea" fell on fertile ground. Numerous entrepreneurs took to the field in competition with Heddon. Many failed. Heddon's success continued, however, and today the Heddon company enjoys a comfortable position among the largest fishing tackle companies in the world.

In the early years of plug production, fishermen were anxious to stock tackle boxes with all the latest designs which promised a full limit. But many designs were never really functional. Minor modifications in shape made significant differences in what would really catch fish. Some plugs were tossed aside. They found the unoccupied compartments of old rusty tackle boxes that contained other rejects

By Phillip M. Pollock

The Lore of the Lure

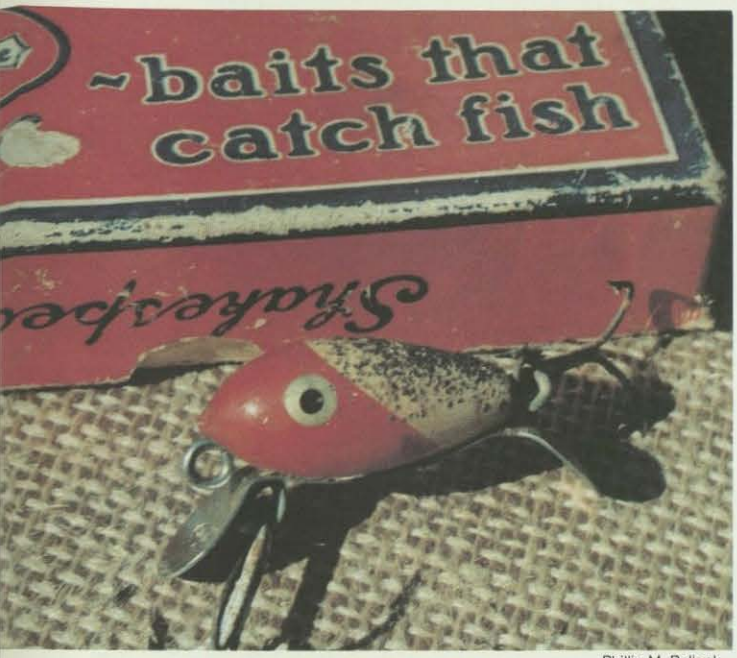
and damaged plugs. Neatly tucked into some obscure corner of a garage or attic, the box and contents remained dormant. One day in the future a young man will spy his grandfather's age-old rejects and a collector will be born.

Collections of fishing plugs often develop in this fashion, but many times they result in a fisherman's simple attempt to recreate his past. His collection may get a start by a visit to an old tackle and bait shop or an old hardware store. Soon he may find friends who have worn equipment and a couple of plugs may turn up. A desire to relive those early fishing experiences will be quickly kindled by dozens of old lures made of materials that manufacturers stopped using at least 20 to 30 years back.

The old adage, "they just don't make 'em like they used to," is certainly true when discussing fishing plugs. Currently, almost all plugs are made of plastic. However, early variations were solid wood. Several coats of high quality enamel paint covered the wood and on many plugs, eyes were formed by using round head tacks and glass. Both innovations created a more three-dimensional look than the simple painted versions, and the glass eyes incorporating a black pupil and tinted iris went a step further by giving each imitation a life-like character. Metal fasteners, hook hangers, spinner blades, and nose blades were intricately designed and of high quality. Brass, steel, nickel and infrequent uses of silver and gold plating all helped to attract fish in those early years.

As a result of these varied materials, early plug compositions evidenced a strong folk art appearance. As was true with early folk artists, fishing plug designers and manufacturers disregarded realism and scale. Therefore plugs that imitated minnows,

From a limited edition print by Phillip M. Pollock



Phillip M. Pollock

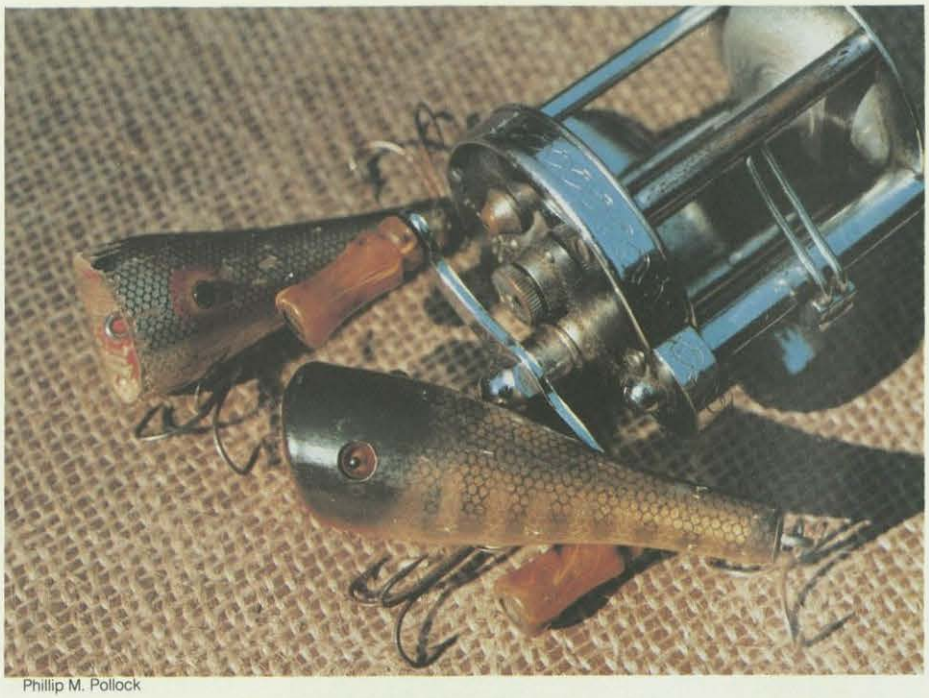
shiners, and frogs all took on a very exaggerated look. Primitive tools and techniques gave each lure a very unique and handcrafted flavor which varied significantly from one company to the next.

Whether plug collectors recognize these nuances of folk art is uncertain; however, many of the same artful skills used in production undoubtedly draw the collector to a certain plug just as a fisherman was drawn to it years ago. Small well formed eyes were tucked neatly into elongated wooden bodies which were coated numerous times with lustrous enamel paints. Paint was applied in a very realistic fashion and lures can be found in finishes such as: pike scale, frog scale finish, yellow perch scale and shiner scale finishes to name only a few. Heddon's popular River Runt offered selective fishermen no fewer than 17 different finishes.

Use of the manufacturers' name on the surface of the plug offered a very individual character to each. Heddon plugs often have the name stenciled on the

Phillip M. Pollock

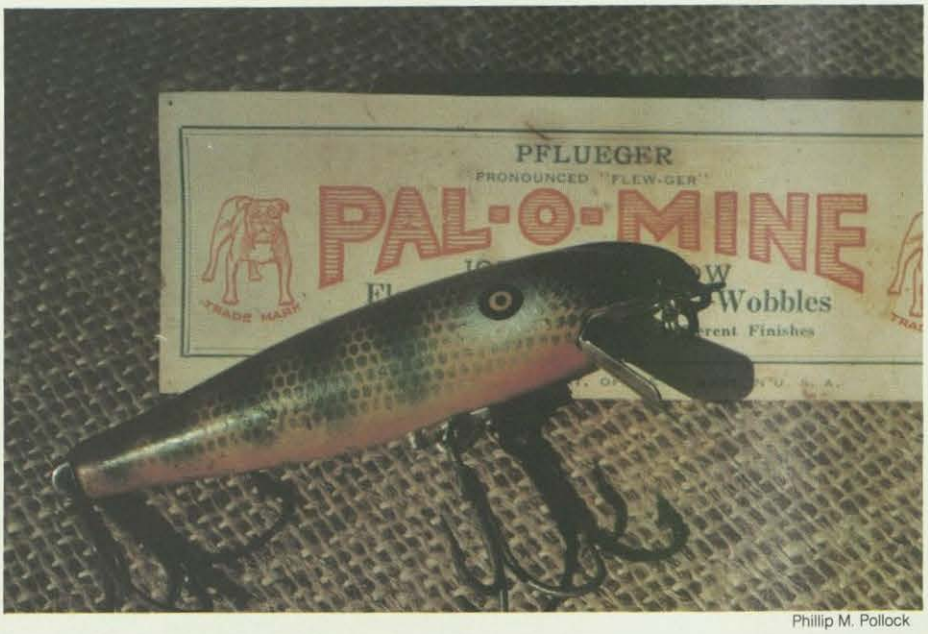
A light, small running plug, Dopey (top), is identified by the metal lip in front that runs the length of the body and extends to the rear. The River Runt was new in 1929 and made of wood all the way into the early '50s. The accompanying original box with this lure increases the plug's value considerably.



Phillip M. Pollock

The C.A. Clark Company manufactured a wooden plug with tack eyes around 1930. It was called Clark's Popper Scout (rear). The lure in the foreground is called Talkie Topper, an Ozarka Lure product. It is of wood with glass eyes. The Pflueger Pal-O-Mine plug (below) was offered to fishermen in 16 different colors.

The Lore of the Lure



Phillip M. Pollock

underside, and as if this weren't enough, the name was frequently stamped into propeller blades. Propellers were commonly found on the front and/or back of the plug and the spinning of the blade as the plug was retrieved through the water functioned as an added incentive for a fish to bite. The Heddon Torpedo is an excellent example of this type of identification. "Heddon Torpedo" was stenciled on the underside of the lure and both front and back propeller blades are stamped "Heddon" on one side, and "Dowagiac" on the other. This latter name is the Michigan production site. The Heddon ZigWag carried this practice further by embossing the name on the underside, a personal touch that collectors prize.

Today, plastics have replaced the labor intensive wooden compositions that dominated the plug market throughout most of the first half of this century. Should the future use of petroleum, necessary in the manufacture of plastics, be restricted to more essential uses, perhaps we will see a return to the earlier wooden plugs. □

REFERENCES FOR THE COLLECTOR

BOOKS

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The American Sporting Collector's Handbook, by Allan J. Liu, Ed.

Speciality catalogs by Clyde Harbin, Sr., 1105 Marlin Rd., Memphis, Tenn. 38116.

MUSEUMS

National Freshwater Fishing Hall of Fame, Hayward, Wisconsin 54843

Perhaps the most misunderstood of all reptiles, the harmless

HOGNOSE

By KYLE HILL

Help! There's a cobra out here!" My wife's high-pitched cry stirred me into instant action. With one jump, I was out the back door and halfway into the yard. What confronted me was really no surprise.

A dark brown three-foot snake was hissing up a storm, flattening its neck and head and inflating its body with air. It held my wife, boy, and two dogs at bay until I walked up and kicked at it with my boot. It instantly stopped the "attack," rolled on its back, regurgitated a toad, gave a few convulsive movements and lay still.

My wife couldn't believe it. "They don't die that easily do they? You barely touched it!" I chuckled and reached down to turn the snake back on its stomach. It promptly rolled over again with its tongue hanging out and mouth agape. I put my finger in its open mouth; it didn't even offer to bite.

We had just witnessed one of the most bizarre behavioral patterns in the wildlife world. The hognose snake is one of the most misunderstood reptiles around. It is completely harmless (unless it makes you hurt yourself getting out of its way). Despite this fact, it is known by such dangerous sounding names as puff adder, spreading adder, and blow viper.

The characteristic behavior of the species involves a very convincing threat display and, if that ruse fails, it plays 'possum. It is nonpoisonous and feeds mainly on toads and insects. Although this curious behavior discourages most predators, man is the exception. In

Known by scary-sounding names like puff adder, spreading adder and blow viper, this black phase of the eastern hognose is actually a cream puff.

R. Simons

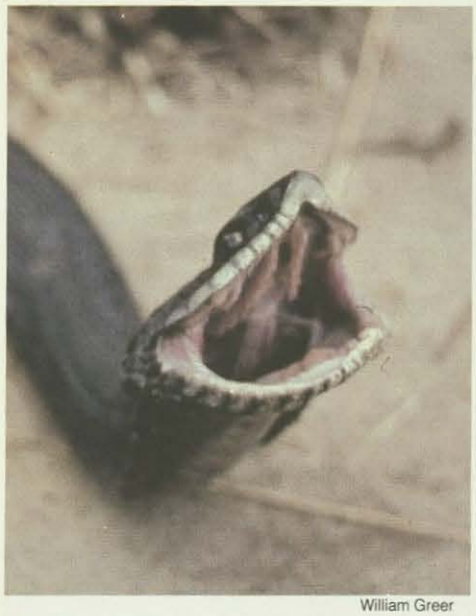
most instances, hognose snakes are mistaken for cobras or some other venemous reptile and, therefore, needlessly killed.

Florida has two species of hognose snake. The Eastern, *Heterodon platyrhinas*, is the larger of the two and sometimes reaches a length of 45½ inches. It comes in several color phases, ranging from yellowish brown to jet black. Normally, it is spotted but it may also be either plain gray or black. The Southern hognose, *Heterodon simus*, ranges up to about 24 inches in length and is nearly always spotted with black on a yellowish brown background. Both snakes are readily identified by an upturned snout and unusual defensive behavior.

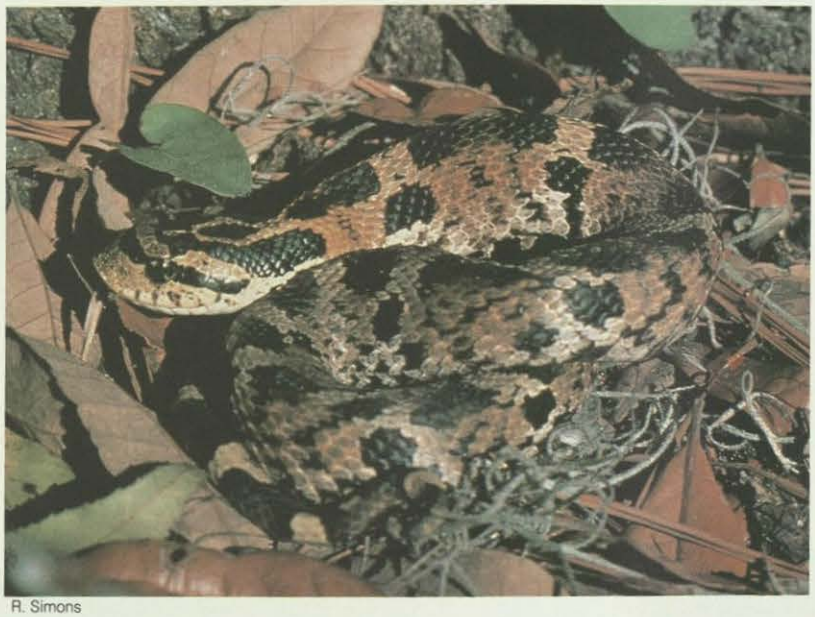
Hognose snakes can be found almost anywhere in Florida, but generally they prefer sandy areas. They make good pets, but after a short period in captivity, they won't perform as readily.

So, the next time someone cries "cobra!" while looking at the antics of a hognose, be the one to step in and save this amazing snake. It just makes good conservation sense. □

A hognose acting scary. To its right the spotted phase of the eastern hognose. Another Florida resident is the southern hognose (bottom).



William Greer



R. Simons

R. Simons

Hunter Education News

The National Bowhunter Education Foundation has combined resources with your Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission's Hunter Education Program to produce an outstanding learning experience. The advanced bow hunting course consists of four hours of the "hows" of bow hunting from certified instructors. As in the prerequisite basic hunter education program, an actual hands-on shooting and field experience will ensure a rewarding and enjoyable time for all involved.

The participants, upon completion of the advanced bowhunting course, will receive certificates and special patches to incorporate onto their hunter education patches. The "hows" of bowhunting cover the major areas of emphasis. The prospective bowhunter as well as the seasoned bowhunter will glean many techniques and time-honored philosophies. The following 15 points of emphasis are the core of the program.

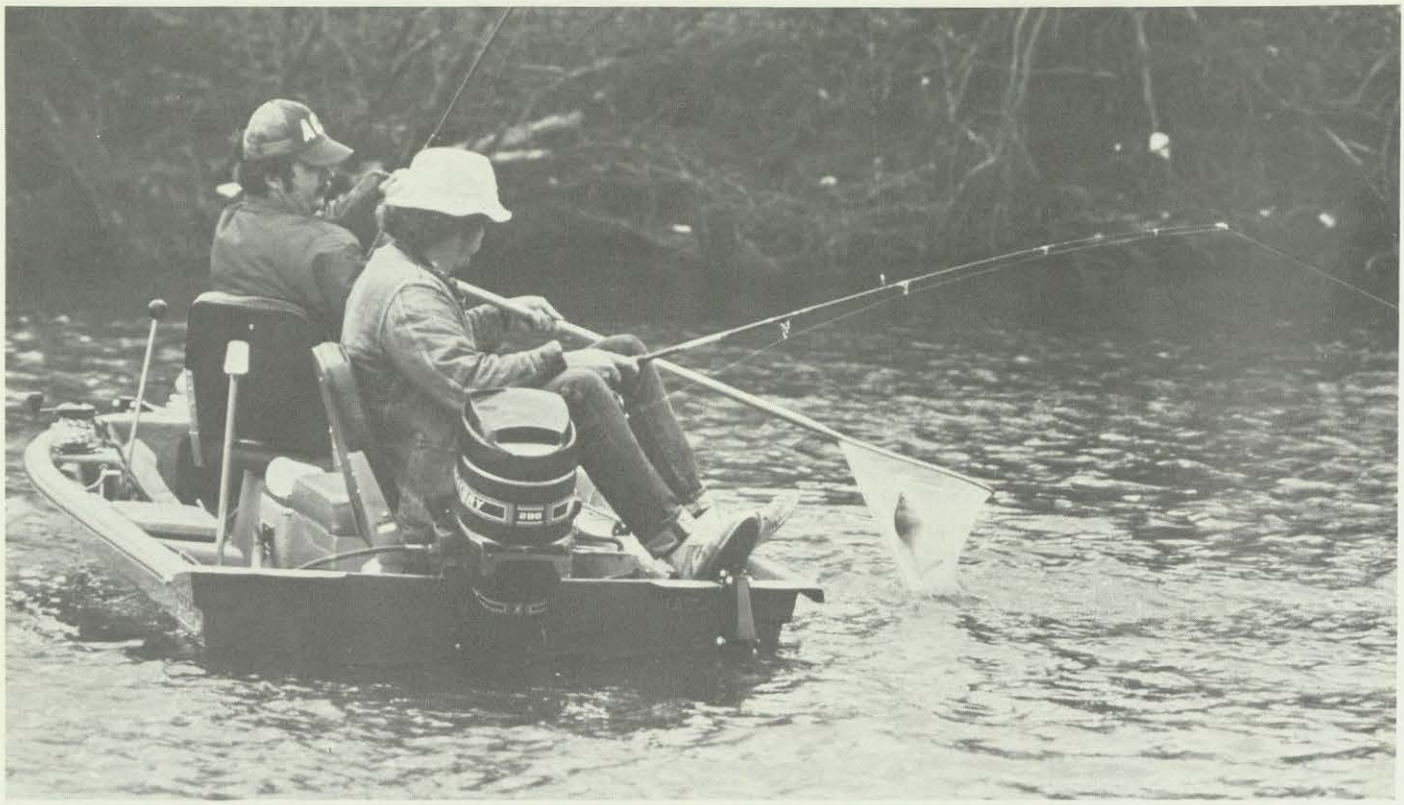
1. Your responsibilities as a bowhunter.
2. How an arrow harvests game.
3. The unwritten law of the bowhunter.
4. Bowhunting methods.
5. Bowhunting safety.
6. Sharpening and/or proper use of replaceable blades in broadheads.
7. Adequate equipment with emphasis on use of matched equipment.
8. The importance of limiting the length of your shot.
9. How to practice.
10. Knowing the vital organs of your animal and picking a spot.
11. Blade injuries. First aid and survival.
12. Reading signs.
13. Game trailing.
14. Field dressing and proper care of your game.
15. Discussion of the available sources of proper equipment for bowhunting.

The field experience, a first time activity for many, provides the opportunity for the student to observe and participate in the use of proper, safe equipment in the field. The nimrod as well as the tenderfoot will be able to understand the proper use of, as well as personal, inherent limitations of bowhunting equipment. The necessary fine art of blood tracking requires the student to examine the flora with the eyes of a Sioux tracker. The certified instructor will make sure the prospective bowhunter will have an understanding of:

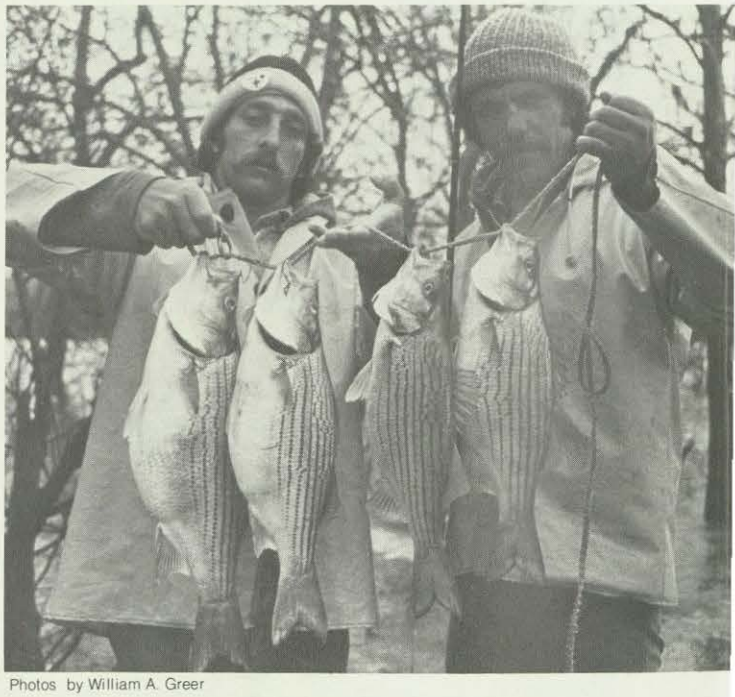
Target shooting helps develop the shooting skills needed by the bowhunter.

1. Adequate legal equipment and familiarity with its proper use.
2. How to sharpen broadheads and/or the proper use of pre-sharpened blades.
3. The importance of limiting the distance of his/her shots.
4. Safety under field conditions.
5. His/her own limitations.
6. Proper use of tree stands and/or ground blinds.
7. Following a blood trail before he/she makes one.
8. Reading signs in the field.

"Bowhunting," Florida's first advanced hunter education program will provide Florida's certified safe hunters with an outstanding opportunity to enter the challenging field of hunting with bow and arrows. For further information, contact the Hunter Education Officer at your nearest GFC office—*Lt. Frank Disbrow.* □



Sport fishermen, above, at work catching white bass for hatchery production. At right, the results of the successful hybrid bass program, a string of sunshine bass.



Photos by William A. Greer

Fishing for Science

How many different reasons can a fisherman come up with for going fishing? Lots . . . such as bringing home dinner, love of the sport, the fresh air and good companionship, to name only a few. Fishing for science, however, is not usually one of the reasons. But that is exactly why, fishing rods in hand, more than 50 fishermen gathered on a March day last year below Jim Woodruff Dam on the Apalachicola River.

During February and March, both white bass and stripers migrate up the river in schools to spawn. Each year Commission biologists utilize this area to collect white bass for cross breeding with stripers to produce Florida's popular "homemade" gamester, the sunshine bass. The most effective method of collecting the "makings" is not with nets or electrofishing but with conventional rod and reel. Surprisingly, fish caught in this manner are in the healthiest condition.

To assist biologists in this project, the Commission and Roy Goodson's Bait and Tackle Shop in Chattahoochee cosponsored a white bass tournament last March. Participants immediately turned each catch over to waiting biologists who were on hand to examine the fish to determine if they were

suitable for the purpose. Each acceptable fish was placed in an aerated holding tank.

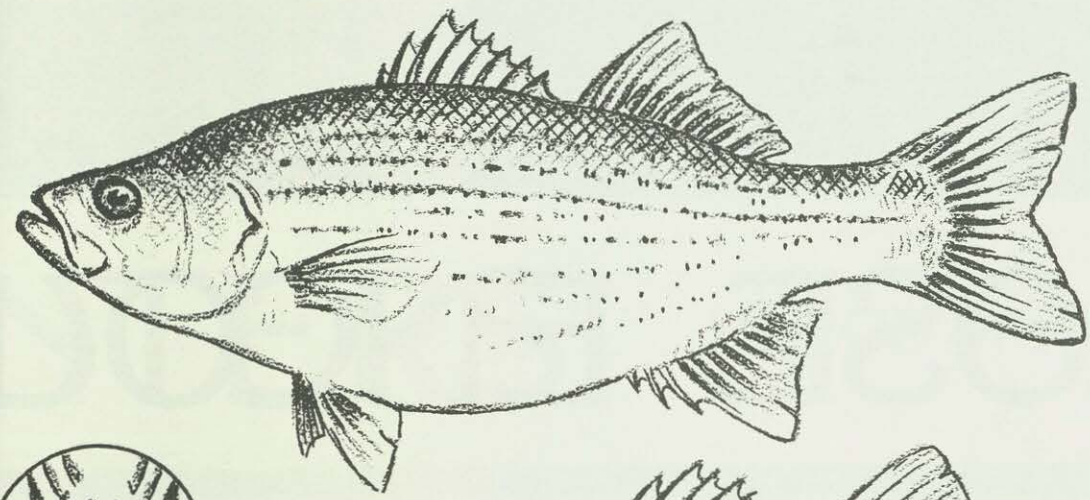
The male white bass were rushed to Richloam Hatchery in Sumter County and used to fertilize eggs of striped bass. The eggs are hatched under carefully controlled conditions. The fry are later placed in outdoor rearing ponds. When they reach from one to two inches in length, they are seined out and transported to various bodies of water around the state. Some 45 Florida lakes have thus far been stocked with sunshine bass.

These hybrids retain most of the desirable qualities of both parents. Sunshines exhibit "hybrid vigor," growing as much as three times larger than the white bass. They also grow more rapidly than the striped bass. Some fish reach a weight of 15 pounds in only five years. While the current Florida rod and reel record is 14 pounds 1 ounce, biologists sampling the Apalachicola River recently captured a fish that weighed 16 pounds. This river has constantly produced record-breaking fish.

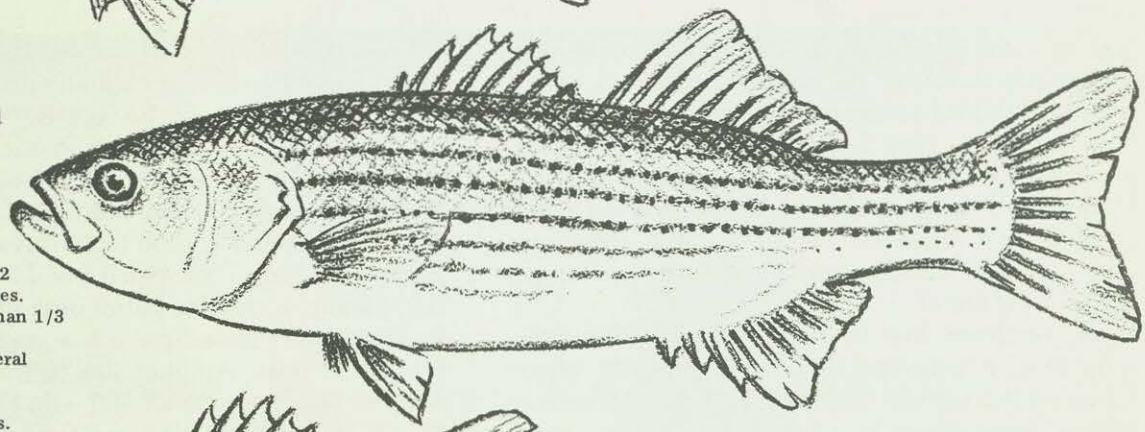
Despite rainy weather during the 1980 tournament, 47 white bass were caught. The end result was more than 100,000 sunshine fry at Richloam. In addition to their conservation good deed, the cooperating fishermen had a good bit of sport. One lucky fisherman landed a 32-pound striper during the contest.

Biologists are pleased with the assistance these sportsmen provided and are optimistic that the tournament will be held annually. The fishermen are not complaining either, except maybe a few who claim people give them strange looks when they say they are hard at work, fishing for science. □

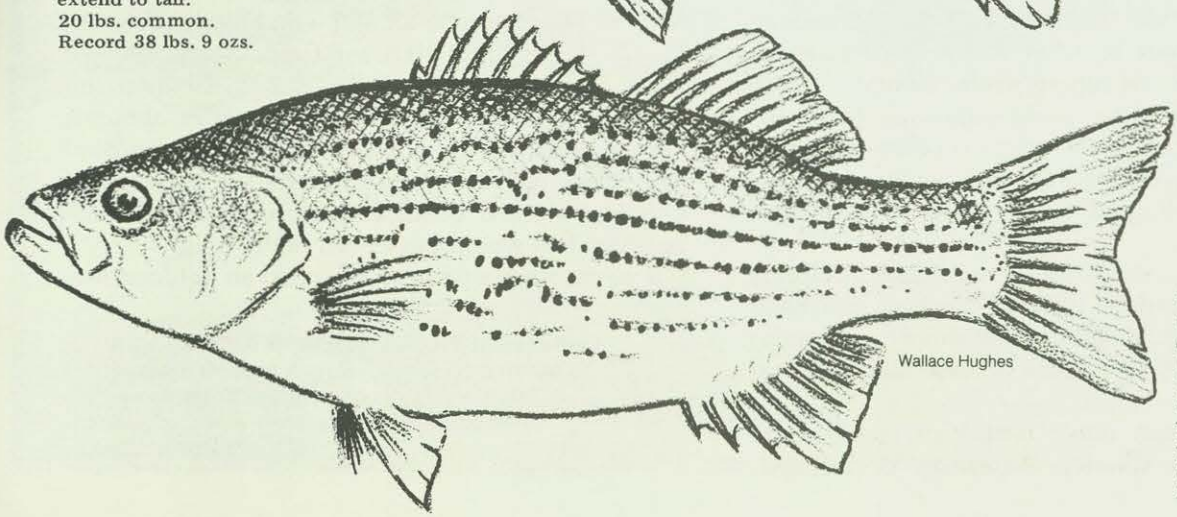
By William Greer



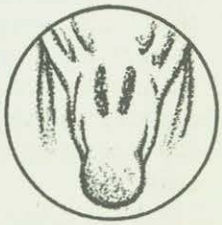
WHITE BASS
Back of tongue has 1 tooth patch.
Body deep, more than 1/3 length.
Stripes faint, only 1 extends to tail.
Seldom exceeds 3 lbs.
Record 4 lbs, 8 ozs.



STRIPED BASS
Back of tongue has 2 distinct tooth patches.
Body slender, less than 1/3 length.
Stripes distinct, several extend to tail.
20 lbs. common.
Record 38 lbs. 9 ozs.



Wallace Hughes



SUNSHINE BASS
Back of tongue has 2 distinct tooth patches.
Body deep, more than 1/3 length.
Stripes distinct, usually broken, several extend to tail.
Seldom exceeds 10 lbs.
Record 14 lbs. 1 oz.

Bob McNally

CLOSE ENCOU

People who do not fish or hunt often wonder why the sports attract 80 million Americans. Why, they ask, should an otherwise sane man arise at 4 a.m. to beat his way through tangled mangroves to some canal or lake in hope of catching a few six-inch bluegills? Why do so many hunters so often suffer physical and financial hardship, and sometimes even risk their necks, solely for the privilege of toting sporting arms?

All fishermen like to catch fish and all hunters want to take game and that is primarily the excuse for going fishing and hunting. But, while sportsmen seldom think about it, what many of them really seek is adventure. Of course, such "adventure" can present itself in some pretty unusual and hair-raising ways. In fact, it's almost a certainty that anyone who spends considerable time fishing, hunting, camping and boating will have his/her share of close calls.

Some of the most widely experienced Florida sportsmen are outdoor writers, the best and most active of whom are afield or afloat almost constantly, worldwide. Here's what some of them had to say on the subject.

Few outdoorsmen range farther or spend more days afield than Charley Waterman of DeLand. When asked what was his most unforgettable outdoor scrape, Charley had a pretty unique answer.

"Stuck in the mud," he laughs. "Twice I've been off by myself and got stuck in the mud so bad I never thought I'd get out. Once I was wade-fishing San Francisco Bay when suddenly I sank up to my hips in mud and couldn't pull myself out. I don't know how long I struggled but I just couldn't get out. Finally, a sheriff's patrol boat spotted me. They motored over, tossed me a line and pulled me out with their boat. Another time I was wading Lake Monroe near Sanford for snipe and almost went up to my ears in mud. It wasn't quicksand, just soft muck that wouldn't let go. I yelled for help, but there was no one around. Finally, after about 20 minutes I tossed my shotgun to more solid ground and slowly inched my way to terra firma. I suppose I could have laid down and rolled over the muck, but even that would have been pretty tough."

It seems no matter how seasoned an outdoorsman

Careless gun handling (above) is the main cause of hunting accidents. Rough water is a hazard to boaters (right). Anglers and boaters in small open boats must be acutely aware of sudden storm squalls.

Neither rain, wind, rough water, snakes, people-eating mud, wayward guns, or berserk bass boats can keep sportsmen from their outdoor destinies.

NTERS

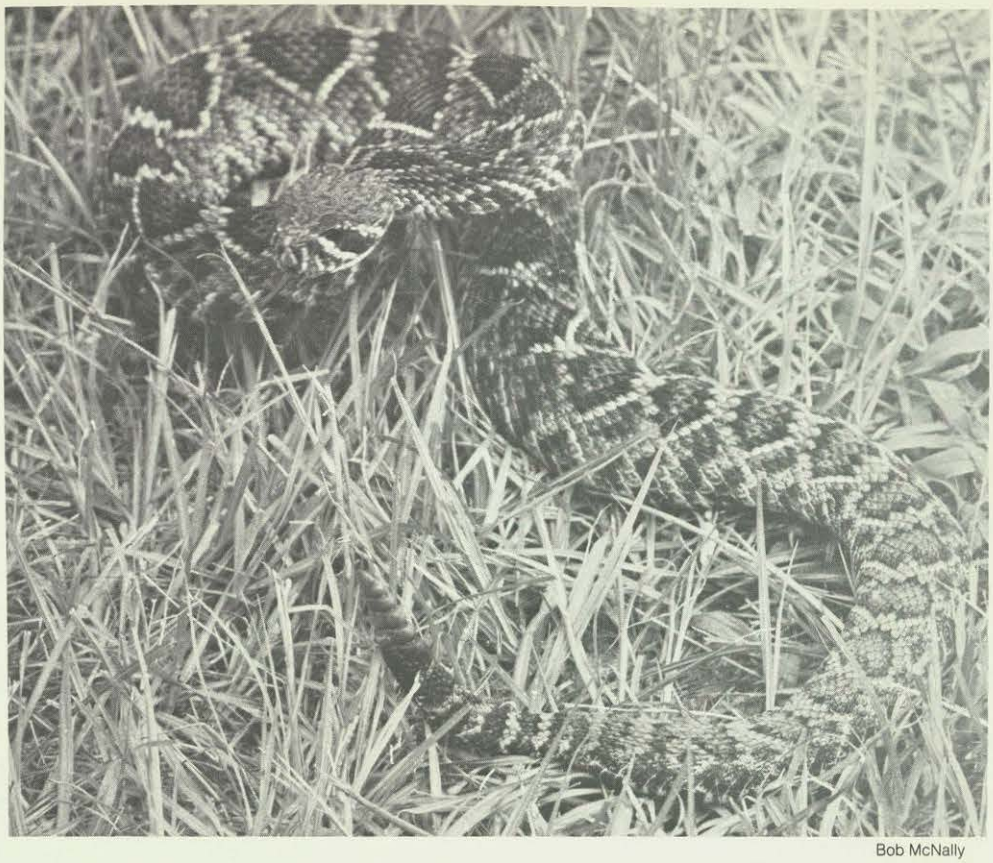
By BOB McNALLY

is, if he's careless for just a brief moment he can get in trouble. For example, most veteran hunters know to be especially mindful of inexperienced ones. So during a Florida deer hunt, I watched the two guys I was with very carefully. Neither of them had much gun handling savvy. However, after two days afield I dropped my guard.

Following a cold, tough morning's hunt we trudged back into the hunting cabin. I flopped onto a bunk bed exhausted and — POW! — a gun discharged. One of the novices hadn't unloaded his rifle outside as he should have. Once inside, he worked the action of the .270 and "somehow" a cartridge went off. What made it worse was that the gun was pointed at me. The bullet missed my back by four inches, plowed through the bunk, and disintegrated when it slammed into the cabin's floor.

Popular outdoors writer Herb Allen of the *Tampa*

Bob McNally



Poisonous snakes, such as this diamondback rattler, are a potential danger to Florida outdoorsmen.

Bob McNally

Tribune has had a number of "close encounters." While traveling to or from fishing spots he has almost crashed in small airplanes four different times, including once when the plane nearly plowed into a Canadian mountain.

"I've been struck at so many times by cottonmouth moccasins I've lost count," he says. "I never wore snakeboots until I had a big arrowheaded rattler strike and just miss my foot as I tramped through some palmettos while hunting in the Ocala National Forest. I had tennis shoes on at the time. Not long after that I bought snakeboots and I wouldn't think of hunting without them now."

Charley Dickey, veteran outdoor scribe from Tallahassee, once talked a bush pilot into landing a small plane on a tiny dirt runway on Mexico's primitive Yucatan Peninsula.

"The pilot didn't want to land, but another guy and I insisted he try it," Dickey recalls. "Down we went and just as we touched down a strong crosswind hit us. The pilot panicked, hit the brakes hard, and the landing gear under the nose of the plane broke off. We didn't flip, but we pushed a lot of dirt for a long ways with the nose of that airplane. None of us was injured seriously, just bruises and scrapes. Luckily, the radio still worked and we called for another plane to come and get us. We lived with the natives for three days, then met the plane at another landing strip about 15 miles away. It was a pretty harrowing experience."

Bobby Wilkes, owner of JW Lures in Jacksonville, almost cashed in his chips one day while bass fishing in central Florida. He and another guy were in a small bow-operated bass boat running down a narrow canal.. Wilkes sat in the stern, the fellow controlling the boat was in the bow.

"We were zipping along about 35 miles per hours," reports Wilkes. "It started to rain and the guy running the boat took his hands off the steering stick and also off the throttle control to put on a rain jacket. He shouldn't have done that, of course, but when he realized what he had done, he reached over and cut the throttle off. The torque from the power being shut down threw the boat into a crazy 90-degree turn and we crashed into a six-foot high sod bank."

"The other guy weighed about 285 pounds, but when we hit that canal bank he left the boat like a bullfrog. He flew 10 feet up on the bank, yet only sprained his thumb."

"I left the back seat like a bullet. My shins clipped a permanent boat ice chest and ripped it out. My shoulder and neck caught the front seat and tore it off. My head hit the throttle and sheared the controls off. My shins were slashed. I had a beaut of a knot on my head and my shoulder almost was dislocated. Yet we both considered ourselves very fortunate."

What price fish and game? Neither rain, wind, rough water, snakes, people-eating mud, berserk bass boats, etc, etc, can keep sportsmen from their outdoor destinies. Which, I suppose, goes to prove that all fishermen and hunters are crazy. But there's security in numbers, to the tune of 80 million! □

HUNTING

How not to spook a turkey

By CHARLES DICKEY

If a hunter for turkeys is experienced, he has great respect for the eyesight of his quarry. Turkeys are quick to spot movement, silhouettes and new or strange objects in their range. Apparently they distinguish color, unlike deer which see in shades of black and white.

Charles Dickey

Suspicious movement probably spooks more spring gobblers than anything else. Since most hunters realize this, they wear camouflage or drab clothing which blends with their surroundings. The clothing helps hide movement and breaks up silhouettes.

But no matter how patient or comfortable the waiting hunter, he has to do some moving. This is especially true when a gobbler is about to walk or strut into shotgun range.

To help hide movement at this critical time, more and more hunters were wearing face masks of camouflage netting. Or they use green, black or brown grease paint, or a combination of colors, to break up a shiny face.

Some hunters go a step farther by using camouflage masking tape to cover their shotguns. They usually do this with an old shotgun, covering everything except the working parts. They also make sure wrist watches and jewelry are in their pockets where they won't shine or sparkle.

Since the hands are more likely to make sudden or long movements, such as the reflex action of swiping at a mosquito before you think, drab or camouflage gloves are standard equipment for the dedicated spring gobbler hunter. The hands must also move to handle the shotgun at the critical moment before firing. If the hands are camouflaged, the chances of the incoming turkey seeing the movement are greatly decreased.

Covering yourself and shotgun completely to resemble a drab blob might sound like a lot of trouble. But it really isn't, especially if you remember it takes only one tiny mistake to lose a shot at a gobbler, perhaps a real trophy.

If you decide to cover yourself completely, this gives you a wider selection of spots to sit and call from. The ideal calling spot is one where you can remain undiscovered but can see the quarry at shotgun range no matter from which direction he approaches. Additionally, you would have a clear shot the instant the turkey came in range.

There is no such spot in all of the woods of Florida. You end up calling from a compromise spot. There is always ground cover, brush, pole timber,

The turkey's keen eyesight and suspicious nature call for camouflage and minimum movement.

palmetto clumps or weeds that prevent you from seeing an approaching turkey from every angle. You do the best you can in selecting a spot, trying to have clear ground visibility in as wide an angle as possible in the direction you guess the turkey will approach.

When I first began hunting turkeys in the spring many years ago, I had heard so many hunters' tales of the uncanny vision of turkeys that I often hid so well that I blocked myself out for most shots if the gobbler did come in range. I soon learned that a suspicious gobbler may circle and come in from behind or quit talking the last 75 yards or so and then arrive from an unexpected angle. It is disheartening to hear a gobbler crunching leaves at 15 or 20 yards and not be able to see him for a clear shot.

From many sad experiences, I learned to be bolder about sitting more in the open. While it is exciting to call an old gobbler in, it's more exciting to call him in and shoot him. If you have to suffer by arising at 4 a.m., it will keep you encouraged if you bag a turkey once in awhile.

A few years back, after several serious lectures from Ben Rodgers Lee, a world champion turkey caller and hunter, I adopted his method of selecting a calling spot. I went to the other extreme and now try to sit in the open.

If possible, I find a large isolated tree and sit at its base with my back propped against it. The tree, of course, has to be in a woods. You're not likely to lure an old gobbler across an open pasture to a single tree standing in the middle.

I try to select a tree where there is not much ground cover above the height of a turkey's head for a distance of 40 yards in the direction I expect the gobbler to come in. Also, I hope the ground cover is low in a complete circle around me. The tree breaks up the silhouette. It also gives me a comfortable back rest and comfort is critical because sometimes a gobbler will converse with you for two or three

Charles Dickey

Charles Dickey

hours before coming in, or deciding to go elsewhere.

Basically, I'm sitting in the open but I depend on my camouflage clothing, face mask and gloves to hide me and my movements. I use a face mask that Lee makes at his turkey supply company in Coffeeville, Alabama. Ben designed and makes it so that an elastic head band holds the eye holes in place. The mask doesn't skid around.

Ben uses No-Mar Camouflage Gun and Bow Tape, sold at most sporting goods stores, to cover his full-choked, 12-gauge Browning semi-automatic shotgun. I usually try to take a shotgun covered in tape but not always because I take a lot of pictures of shotguns and you can't tell much about them once they are wrapped.

Even though the hunter and his gun are covered in camouflage, it still doesn't mean a turkey can't see a sudden movement. It means the turkey is not as likely to.

If an approaching gobbler is talking or gobbling, it's fairly easy to track his position and distance. If he's more than 100 yards away, you may as well sit comfortably and relax the best you can. Depending on the cover situation, when I suspect the turkey is within 75 yards or so, I edge around and get in position to shoot.

I'm a right-handed shooter so I turn my left shoulder in the direction of the turkey. I pull both knees up and dig my heels into the soil so that I'm comfortable. I rest the forearm of the shotgun across the top of my left knee in the direction of the turkey. The muzzle is pointed about a yard off the ground at 40 yards, which means the comb of the shotgun is almost under my cheekbone. When the turkey comes in range, and is properly identified as a legal male, I am ready to shoot with a minimum of movement.

Complete camouflage and a tree to break body outline helps give hunter an edge on wily quarry. Some hunters camouflage guns, too.

At that instant, a gobbler you didn't know was around may flush 30 feet behind you. Or you may catch sight of a young tom out of the side of your eye. And, since we are turkey hunting, any number of unexpected things may happen. The gobbler you've been chatting with may stroll back and forth for an hour, challenging the world, but just out of range.

You may not get a shot at all. But at least you know you did everything you could to get a shot. You didn't make a mistake and the gobbler didn't make a mistake. Perhaps you can call it a draw. But tomorrow the old gobbler may make one mistake while you commit no errors!

Winchester For Sale

A long tradition of manufacturing firearms in America is making an abrupt turn. Olin Corporation has announced that it is selling its Winchester Division that makes guns. The corporation will continue to manufacture ammunition under the Western and Winchester brands.

At press time, no buyer had been announced for the firearms division. Presumably the buyer will want to keep the Winchester name which has been famous for more than a century.

For many years, Winchester made the best shotgun on the market for the money. Certainly the Model 12 was the most rugged and durable. It took about 10 years of shooting to limber up the pump and, if you weren't careful, in 30 or 40 years you might have to take it to a gunsmith for minor repairs.

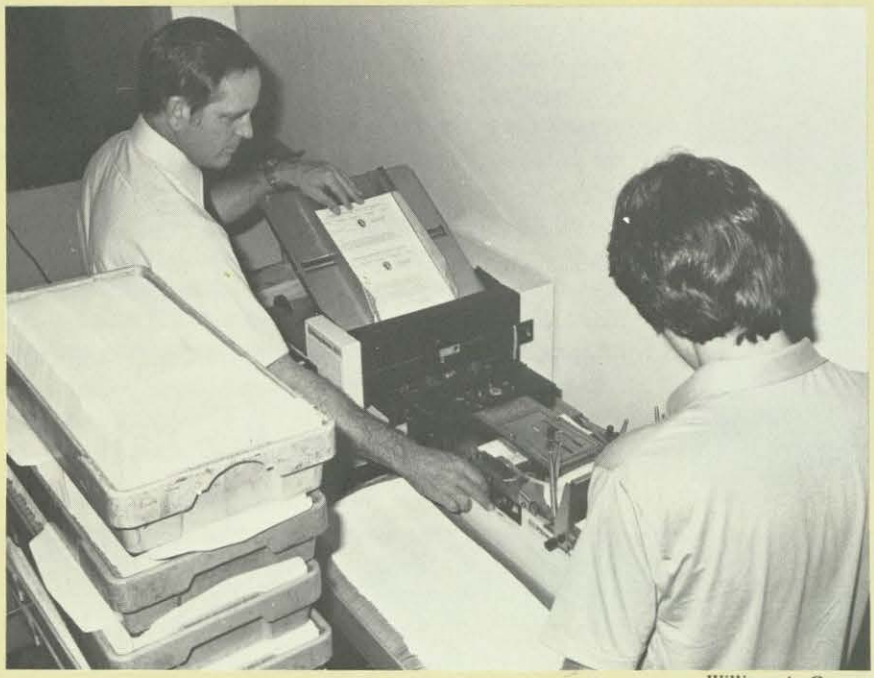
The receiver was machined out of a solid block of steel. A great deal of hand labor was required and the Model 12 was taken out of production a few years back except for certain clay-target versions. The classical Model 12 couldn't compete against cheaper pumps and mass produced gas-operated semi-automatics.

Another great old shotgun that is still seen in the field once in awhile is the Winchester Model 1897, the old hammer pump that was popular with waterfowlers and other gunners.

The Model 70 centerfire rifle in a variety of calibers has been one of the top bolt-action rifles for many years. You may have learned to shoot on Winchester's Model 67 .22 single-shot. Afterwards, perhaps you graduated to the repeating Models 61, 62 and 63. And then came the glorious day when you were old enough to have your own Model 94, just like the western heroes.

Winchester has been a grand name in the history of American firearms production, both in war and peace. Let's hope that some of the tradition will continue with the company that buys them. □

CONSERVATION SCENE



William A. Greer

Annual Surveys Under Way

Robert Butler (left) of the Commission's Division of Wildlife oversees the early March mailing of two annual hunter surveys. One survey went to approximately 7,500 hunters randomly selected among those who purchased a hunting license during the 1980-81 season. The second questionnaire was mailed to close to 19,000 persons selected from those who had bought a wildlife management area permit during the past season. The Division is seeking to identify the estimated statewide game harvest as well as the harvest on each management area. In addition, the hunters will be asked to help obtain an estimate of the mandays of hunter pressure and the percentage of active hunters. ■

BOSTICK SWORN IN

The newest member of the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, William G. "Bill" Bostick Jr., was sworn into office at the March 6 meeting in Tallahassee.

Appointed by Governor Bob Graham to a five-year term, the Winter Haven resident replaces Dr. Donald Rhodes of West Eau Gallie whose term expired in January.

An avid hunter and fisherman, he is married and the father of three. Bostick is vice-president of the Auburndale-based Commercial Carrier Corporation, an intrastate carrier company specializing in construction material and dry goods transport. He is also vice-president of Clay Hyder Trucking Lines Inc., an interstate refrigerated truck line dealing in the transport of perishable goods.

Bostick started his career in the trucking industry at the early age of 12 when he began sweeping out the shop after school. It wasn't until some 15 years ago, after he finished a hitch in the Florida National Guard, that he joined the firm on a fulltime basis.

Among his professional memberships are the National Perishable Traffic Association and the Florida Concrete Products Association. He is currently first vice-president of the Florida Trucking Association; on the executive committee of the American Trucking Association; on the board of directors of the Common Carriers Conference, Irregular Route of ATA; on the executive board of the Gulf Ridge Council of Boy Scouts of America and in the leadership program of the Winter Haven Area Chamber of Commerce and the Citizens Council for Budget and Research.

In spite of an active professional and community involvement program, the new Commissioner manages to find time for his true interest, the out-of-doors. He comes by his love of the state's natural resources from his father. Bostick remembers that his father, who was in law

Commissioner Bostick

enforcement during his early life, impressed upon his sons, at an early age, a respect for the rules of sportsmanship, something Bostick has tried to pass on to his children.

Bird hunting remains Bostick's first love. Although he no longer owns his bird dogs after giving up a quail lease near Orlando, he does have a "fine goose and duck" Laborador who accompanies him each year to Texas. There, at Eagle Lake for the last six years, Bostick has taken advantage of some excellent goose hunting.

He is no slouch when it comes to wetting a line, either. His piscatorial pursuit has landed him in such places as Australia last year where his group was able to catch and release some 14 black marlin.

So what is a trucking executive doing as part of a wildlife board? Bostick feels strongly that, "if we are not careful, by the time my children are grown, 'wild' hunting as I have enjoyed will not be allowed.

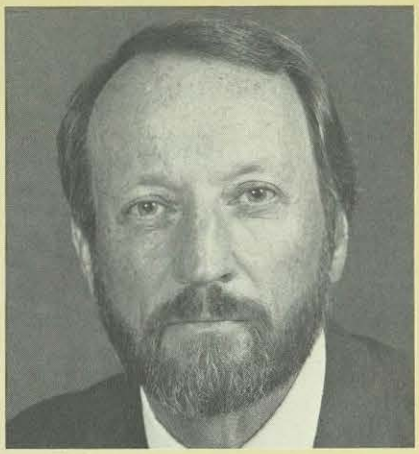
"We can't let our outdoor heritage be legislated away," he said. "I am very concerned about where Florida is going in the next 20 years regarding habitat and the protection of our wildlife."

The father of three brings to the Commission not only a sound business background, but also a sincere regard for Florida's natural environment. ■

Hires Elected Chairman

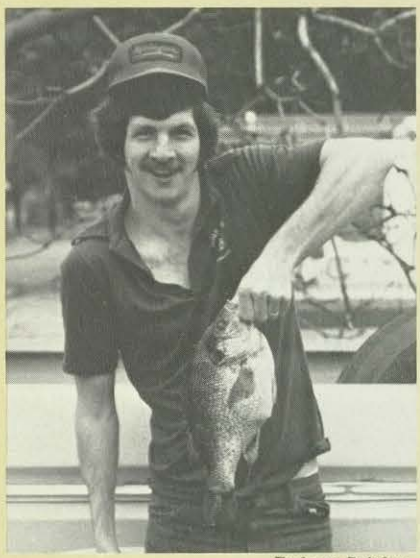
Thomas Hires of Tampa was elected chairman of the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission at the January meeting in Panama City. The new chairman is senior vice president of the Jim Walter Corporation and president of the company's homes division. He was appointed to the Commission in April 1979.

Chairman Hires



Vice-chairman Rainey

Also at the Panama City meeting, Miami veterinarian Dr. C. Tom Rainey was elected to fill the vice chairman's spot. He has been on the Commission since February 1980. ■



Robert Seigler

RECORD Shellcracker

A new state record shellcracker, a 3 pound 9 ouncer, was logged in during February. Ed Tyus of Sneads landed this bragging-sized fish from Merritt's Mill Pond in Jackson County. This fish edged out by a slight margin the record caught by Buddy Collins in March 1980. That fish also came from Merritt's Mill Pond. ■

Lee Rue On Game Animals

The Complete Guide to Game Animals, published by Book Division, Times Mirror Magazines Inc. 1981.

This second edition of Leonard Lee Rue's field book of North American game animals describes the behavior of a variety of species; how they obtain their food, make their homes, cope with enemies and weather, communicate with their kind, breed, care for their young, and other details. About 10 percent of the species of North American animals are treated in this book. Such widely recognized game species as deer, elk, moose, bear, mountain sheep and others are presented. In addition, an array of less-publicized but huntable species are considered, from opossums, raccoons and bobcats to woodchucks, ground squirrels and prairie dogs.

Well illustrated with many quality photographs the likes of which have made Leonard Lee Rue III one of our most highly regarded wild-

life photographers, this is a thorough, interesting reference on the subject. Contact: Leonard Lee Rue III, R.D. 3, Box 31, Blairstown, N.J. 07825. ■

YOUNGSTERS NEED FACTS ABOUT WILDLIFE

The average school-age youngster thinks the white-tailed deer, elk and antelope are in danger of extinction and knows very little about the role of wildlife management in conserving America's wildlife, according to tests recently conducted for the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF).

More than 80 percent of the nearly 500 youngsters questioned indicated they thought the elk, deer or antelope were in "serious danger of extinction" or "some danger of extinction;" and only 20 percent indicated any knowledge of the role of wildlife management in America. The vast majority of these youngsters thought most American wildlife was in trouble and were extremely surprised to learn that many species are more abundant today than they were at the turn of the century.

The testing, performed by American Education Services Inc., Bedford Hills, N.Y., was done on behalf of the NSSF and the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

"This testing, which was conducted in urban, suburban and rural schools, points to a disturbing lack of knowledge about the current status of wildlife species such as deer, antelope and elk," commented Bob Delfay, director of public relations for the NSSF. "Youngsters are both surprised and delighted when they learn of the restoration of these wildlife species," Delfay said. "It is good news for a change and it's a story that needs to be told."

In an effort to provide youngsters with the facts on the success of wildlife management in restoring to abundance many species of once-threatened wildlife, the NSSF has teamed with the international group to prepare a factual teaching package on the subject.

"The Un-endangered Species" is moderated by well-known wildlife ecologist Dr. Anne LaBastille and features commentary by representatives of the National Wildlife Federation, the Wildlife Management Institute and the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agenices.

Individual sportsmen, as well as sportsmen's clubs and conservation groups, can learn how to obtain copies of this program for donation to their local school systems by writing: The Un-endangered Species, 1075 Post Road, Riverside, CT 06878. ■

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FLORIDA WILDLIFE

Dedicated to the appreciation and enjoyment of our wildlife heritage, and to a fuller understanding of efforts directed toward the protection, restoration, enhancement, and wise use of our natural resources.

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coontie

(ZAMIA)

Coonti (coontie) the Florida Indians called this important food plant. Belonging to the scientific genus *Zamia*, it is the only U.S. representative of an ancient group of tropical and semi-tropical plants, the cycads. The key to its food value lies in the bulb-like underground trunk which contains a good quality of starch. For use as food, however, the material must be processed to remove the toxic water-soluble hydrocyanic acid.

The technique used by the Seminoles, as witnessed in 1880 by Clay MacCauley in the Peace River country, was as follows:

Using a hole cut into a pine log as a mortar, the chopped roots were pounded with a hardwood pestle. The resulting pulp was then "taken to a nearby creek and thoroughly saturated with water in a vessel made of bark. The pulp was then washed in a straining cloth, the starch draining into a deer hide suspended below.

"When the starch had been thoroughly washed from the mass, the latter was thrown away and the starchy sediment in the water left to ferment in the deer skin. After some days, the sediment was taken from the water and spread upon palmetto leaves to dry. When dried, it was a yellowish-white flour, ready for use."

For a time during the late 1800s and early 1900s, commercial processing plants operated in the Miami and Tampa areas. The flour was used in the U.S. in the manufacture of animal crackers and as a cosmetic powder, but most of it was sold for domestic use in the West Indies.

The inroads of development on its habitat during recent years, coupled with removal of plants for landscaping, have resulted in the listing of *Zamia* as a threatened species.—*Morrie Naggiar* □

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